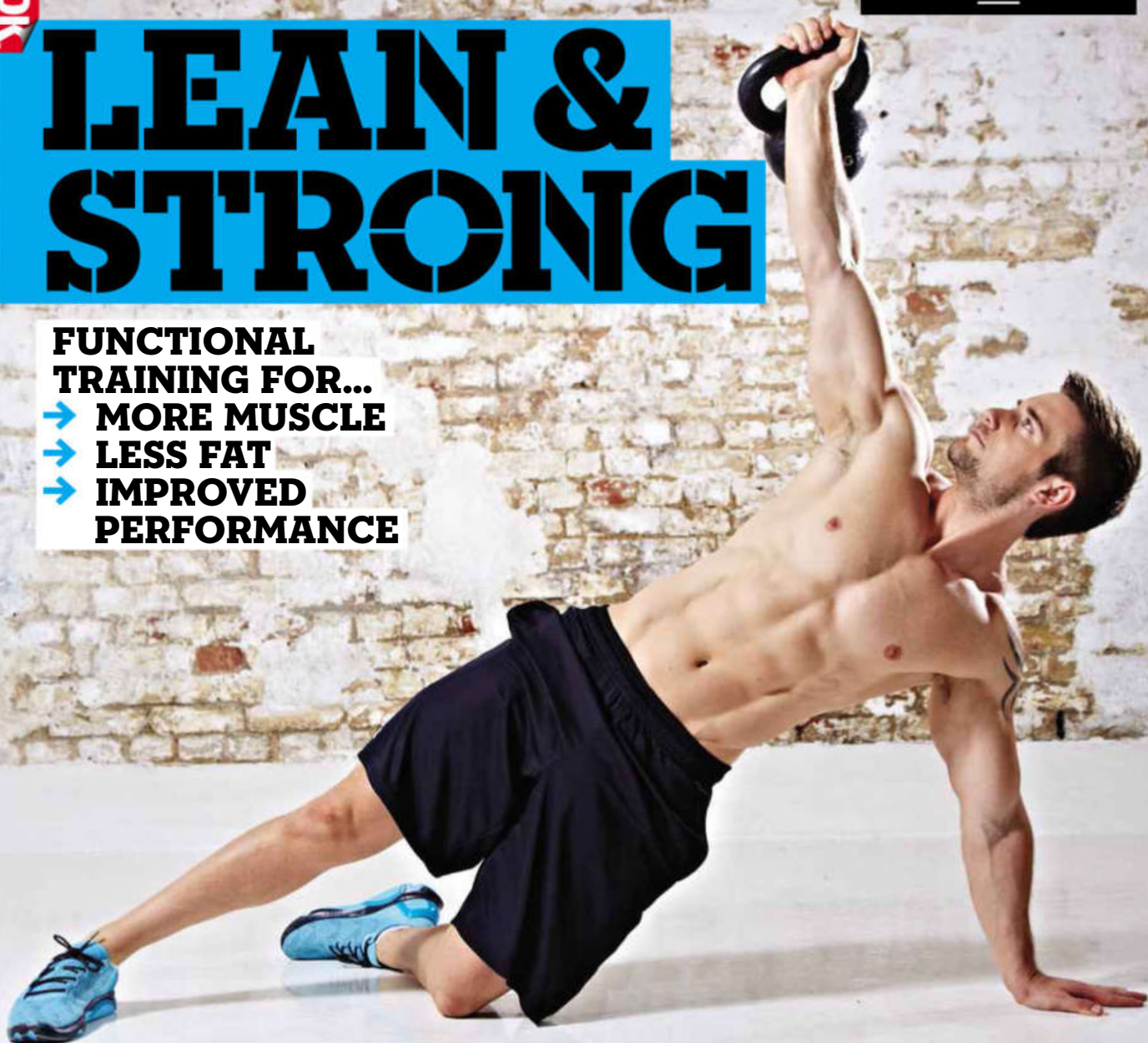


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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



MAX ANDERTON

Max is head of digital content for *Men's Fitness* and edits the Upgrade section of the magazine. Max is a keen runner and recently posted a sub-3hr 30min marathon time. His favourite moves are the pull-up (p31) because you can do it anywhere and the muscle-up (p98) because of its deceptive difficulty.

Follow him on Twitter @MaxAndertonMF

MATT HUCKLE

Matt is features writer for *Men's Fitness*. He recently devoted 12 weeks to fixing a series of mobility issues using the moves you'll find in this book and dropped from 16% body fat to 9% in the process. His favourite move is the deadlift (p50), the classic test of strength.

Follow him on Twitter @Matt_Huckle



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 8

Meet the writers

ABOUT THE BOOK 10

How to use this guide to transform your functional fitness

THE MOVES 12

Discover how to perform essential functional fitness training exercises

WARM-UP 14

Foam rolling 16

Mobility movements 18

BODYWEIGHT 21

Press-up 22

Explosive press-up 23

Squat 24

Lunge 26

Pistol 27

Box pistol 28

Supported pistol 29

Bulgarian split squat 30

Pull-up
Burpee
Box jump
Single-leg box jump
Depth jump
Skipping
Double-under

BARBELL 41

Back squat 42

Front squat 44

Thruster 46

Overhead squat 48

Deadlift 50

Romanian deadlift 52

Snatch-grip deadlift 53

Stiff-leg deadlift 53

Overhead press 54

Push press 56

Military press 57

Push jerk 57

Power clean 58

KETTLEBELL 61

Goblet squat 62

31 Swing 64

32 One-arm swing 66

34 American swing 67

35 Snatch 68

36 Clean and press 70

38 Turkish get-up 72

39 Farmer's walk 74

Overhead carry 75

Offset carry 76

Waiter's walk 77

OLYMPIC LIFTS 78

Snatch 80

Clean 82

Jerk 84

Snatch warm-up 86

Clean and jerk warm-up 88

Snatch high pull 90

Hang snatch 91

Power clean 92

Hang clean 93

GYMNASTICS 94

Ring dip 96

Ring muscle-up 98

Pull	100
Bar muscle-up	101
Kipping pull-up	102
Handstand press-up	104
Handstand walk	106
Toes to bar	107

CARDIO 108

Cycling	110
Running	114
Rowing	118
Swimming	122

WORKOUTS 126


Beginner lifting	130
Intermediate lifting	134
Advanced lifting	138
Olympic lifting	142

MEET THE ATHLETES 146

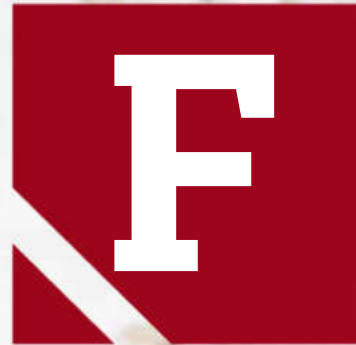
Rich Froning	148
Josh Bridges	154

GLOSSARY 160

ABOUT THIS BOOK



Prepare your body for anything with a detailed breakdown of the most important moves in fitness for building muscle, improving mobility and burning fat. This book has everything you need, whether you want to compete in the next CrossFit Games or just get in and out of bed more easily



unctional training is a simple concept: you do exercises that train the body for movements you do in everyday life, such as running, jumping and lifting your own bodyweight.

In this book you'll find a comprehensive breakdown of functional-training moves including barbell, kettlebell, bodyweight and Olympic lifts, as well as tips from the pros who live and breathe this style of training. You'll also learn how to warm up safely and effectively, and get the most out of your cardio so you've got the work capacity to keep shifting weights. Once you've got the moves down, you can dive into the workouts that put your new knowledge to good use.

Finally, some of CrossFit's star athletes show you just how far it's possible to take this style of training if you're willing to put in the time and effort.

Whatever your goals and abilities, the workouts in this book will challenge and engage you. And most importantly, enhance your level of fitness.



THE MOVES

Any good coach will tell you technique is king when it comes to training. Our in-depth form guides mean you'll have access to the best advice for each exercise. The moves in this book are broken down into categories so you'll be able to quickly reference the correct form, even if you're mid-workout



Foam rolling and mobility

p14

Bodyweight

p21

Barbell

p41

Kettlebell

p61

Olympic lifts

p78

Gymnastics

p94

Cardio

p108

WARM-UP

Reduce your risk of injury by preparing your body with mobility-building moves and foam-roller exercises

Functional fitness means combining strength and endurance to move your body as effectively as possible. A proper warm-up is a vital part of any workout because strength means nothing if your body isn't in the correct position to maximise its energy output, while efficient movements ensure good endurance by limiting the effect they have on your cardiovascular system. Sure, the more you do a move the better you'll get at it, but you can save yourself a lot of time and energy by working on your body's mobility and flexibility to increase your overall range of motion.

Most jobs involve sitting down for the majority of the day. This means at the start of a workout everything - especially your hips, core and legs - is tight, which limits your mobility. Tight hip flexors, for example, make deep squats tough, while tense shoulders make it difficult to do any overhead lifts without over-arching your back.

Ensure your body is fully prepared for the rigours of functional fitness training by following the two routines over the next few pages. For best effect, do them after a gentle five-minute session on a rower, stationary bike or treadmill to get your heart pumping and more blood flowing through your muscles.



FOAM ROLLING

WHY DO IT?

Use a foam roller to give yourself a sports massage and encourage myofascial release to relax contracted muscles and improve circulation. Do five to ten rolls for each body part.

GLUTES

- o Cross one leg over the other while sitting on top of the foam roller. Lean slightly towards the leg you're working.
- o Roll down your glutes. The entire movement is no more than a few centimetres, so make the movement slow and deliberate.
- o Shift your weight to the centre and then lean over to your other hip to hit different areas.



CALVES

- o Rest your lower leg on the foam roller, with your toes pointing upwards. If you need more pressure, cross your free leg over your rolling leg.
- o Lift your hips off the ground and slowly roll the entire calf muscle from bottom to the top, ending just below your knee.
- o Hit the inner and outer areas of your calves by turning your leg to one side and then the other.



HAMSTRINGS

- o Rest one leg on the foam roller just behind the knee with the other planted on the floor for support.
- o Lean back and push your leg forwards until the roller is at the start of your glutes. Hold and return to the start.



MOBILITY MOVEMENTS

WHY DO IT?

Boost your performance by letting your body experience the kind of motions you'll be doing without the extra loads. Do two to three sets of ten reps for each exercise.

BAND PULL-APART

- o Stand holding a resistance band in front of you with your hands at shoulder height.
- o Slowly stretch the band apart, focusing on squeezing your shoulder blades together rather than using your arms.
- o Hold for a few seconds in the widest position before returning to the start under control.

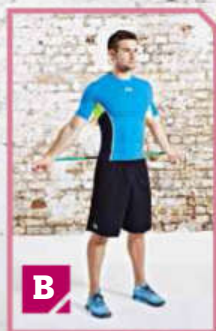
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B



B



BAND DISLOCATE

- o Hold the band in both hands below your waist. Lift your arms upwards and outwards until the band is above your head, then roll your shoulders back so your arms come behind your back.
- o Lower as far as is comfortable. Hold for a few seconds, then return to the start under control.

A



A



BAND HIGH-PULL

- o Stand with one end of the band under your toes, holding the other end in front of you in both hands at waist height.
- o Slowly pull the band towards your chin so your elbows flare out to the sides.
- o Hold for a few seconds before lowering back to the start under control.

B





A

BAND RAISE

- o Stand with one end of the band under your toes holding the other end in front of you in both hands at waist height.
- o Keeping your arms locked, raise the band until your arms are straight out in front of your chin.
- o Hold and then slowly return to the start under control.



B



B



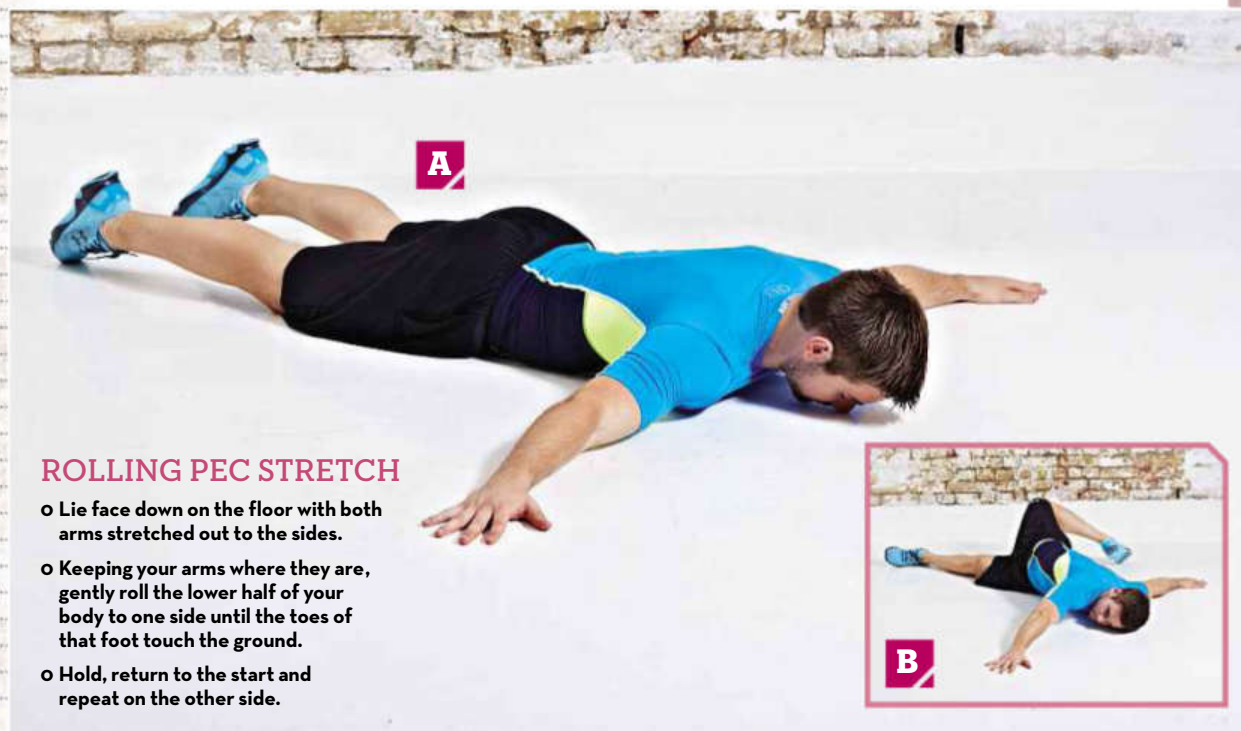
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MOUNTAIN CLIMBER STRETCH

- o Start in the top press-up position. Bring one foot forwards until it's next to the hand on the same side.
- o Hold for a few seconds, flexing your other leg and back.
- o Return to the start and repeat with the other leg.



A

ROLLING PEC STRETCH

- o Lie face down on the floor with both arms stretched out to the sides.
- o Keeping your arms where they are, gently roll the lower half of your body to one side until the toes of that foot touch the ground.
- o Hold, return to the start and repeat on the other side.



B



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BODYWEIGHT MOVES

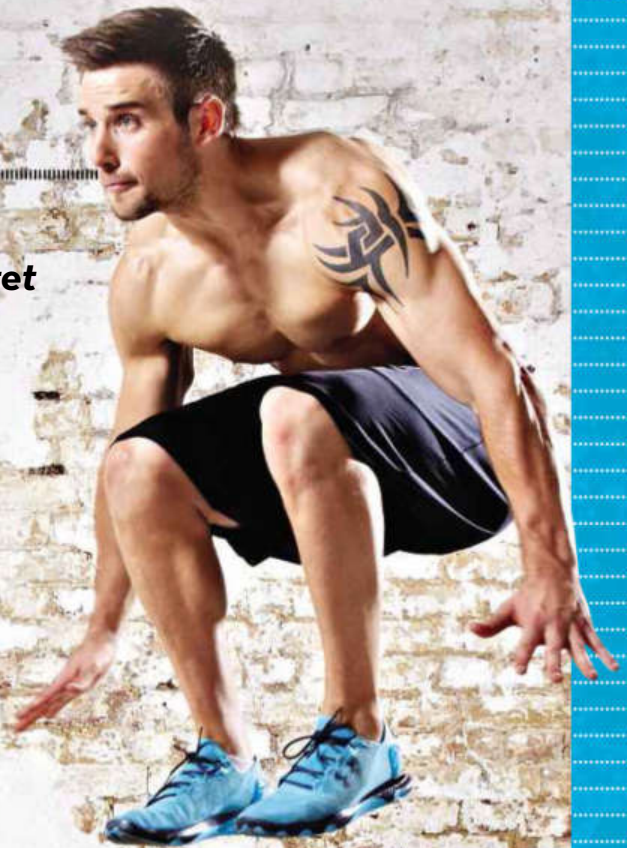
Lifting weights isn't the only way to build strength and burn fat. You can get ripped doing moves using only your own bodyweight and, best of all, you can do them virtually anywhere

THE COACH

Andy McKenzie, also known as Ironmac, is one of Britain's top strength and conditioning coaches. His expertise comes from 11 years' active service with 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery. In 2012, he founded the Training Lab, a gym with the mantra, 'Set standards, not limits.'

McKenzie works with professional and amateur athletes in the UK and worldwide. His clients include MMA fighters, CrossFit athletes, ultra-endurance runners, Arctic explorers and personal trainers. In this section, he shares his knowledge on how to do the essential bodyweight moves that pop up in cross-training workouts time and time again, with pro tips and the reason why each is so essential to helping you move better, get stronger and be as functionally fit as possible.

For more about McKenzie, visit ironmacfitness.com where you can join Beast Mode, his online training zone.



PRESS-UP

PRO TIP

'Keep your core tensed but relax your shoulders,' says McKenzie. 'It will work your abs more, reduce shoulder fatigue and make explosive reps easier.'



WHY DO IT?

'The basic bodyweight move everyone knows should be an essential part of your exercise arsenal,' says McKenzie. 'Done correctly the press-up will build your chest and shoulders, while strengthening your core.'

THE MOVE

- o Start with your hands shoulder-width apart, thumbs underneath your shoulders and body straight from head to heels. Tighten your abs, then your glutes to create tension in your core.
- o Lower yourself until your elbows reach 90°, pause, and then explosively press back up.



EXPLOSIVE PRESS-UP

MAKE IT HARDER

PRO TIP

'To build endurance and develop the fast-twitch muscle fibres needed for the explosive movement, do ten seconds of explosive push-ups with 45 seconds' rest for as long as you can,' says McKenzie.



WHY DO IT?

'The split-second strength required to lift yourself off the ground builds your explosive power and turns the press-up into a move that also builds cardio endurance,' says McKenzie.

THE MOVE

- o Start in a normal press-up position. Lower yourself until your elbows reach 90°, pause, then press back up with enough force to bring your hands off the floor.
- o Keeping your body in a straight line and thumbs under your shoulders, land with your hands in the starting position and lower yourself under control.



SQUAT

WHY DO IT?

'Deep bending of the knees is vital for good mobility. It's intrinsic to many real-life movements and should be done on a daily basis,' says McKenzie. 'Think of it as flossing for the lower body.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with your feet slightly more than shoulder-width apart, with your weight spread equally between them. Hold your arms straight out in front of you for balance.
- Squat, concentrating on keeping your hips back, your chest out and your eyes looking straight ahead.
- Keep going until your hip crease is just lower than your knees, pause, then stand to return to the start.

A



PRO TIP

'Use "triangle feet" to distribute the load,' says McKenzie. 'Ensure your big toe, little toe and heel are all in contact with the floor, sharing the pressure evenly between them.'

A man with short brown hair is performing a squat exercise. He is wearing a blue and green athletic shirt, black shorts, and blue sneakers. He is in a deep squat position with his knees bent and arms extended forward. The background is a light-colored brick wall. A small blue square with the letter 'B' is positioned near his head.**B**

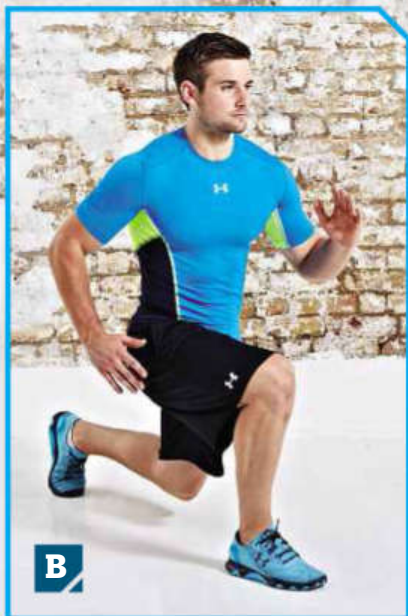
LUNGE

WHY DO IT?

'An effective exercise in itself, the lunge also complements other leg moves to maximise gains in leg strength,' says McKenzie. 'It will also improve the flexibility and movement range of your hip flexors to help keep you injury free.'

THE MOVE

- From a standing start, lunge forwards twice the distance of a normal step, or until the heel of your rear foot leaves the floor.
- Keep your core tight as you lower under control and try to avoid your rear knee touching the floor.
- Bring the opposite arm up to maintain balance. Squeeze your quads and glutes on the leading leg as you move back to the start.



PRO TIP

'If you want to work your glutes even harder and get true buns of steel, do a reverse lunge afterwards by lungeing backwards instead of forwards. Focus on dropping your hips back and keeping your weight on the heel of your front leg.'

PISTOL

WHY DO IT?

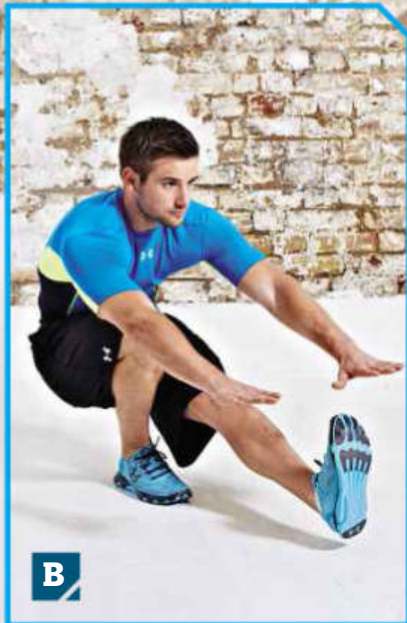
'This tricky exercise builds balance and coordination as well as leg strength,' says McKenzie. 'There's no cheating with form on this one and it requires perseverance to get it right, but the benefits make it well worth the effort.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with one foot off the ground in front of you with your toes pointing to the ceiling. Stretch your arms out.
- Keep your upper body leaning forwards and use your hands as a counterbalance as you slowly lower yourself, keeping your leg outstretched throughout.
- Aim for your stomach to come in contact with your upper thigh.
- Control the descent until the hamstring of your supporting leg rests on top of the calf. Rise slowly while keeping tension in your legs.

PRO TIP

'Push the heel of your leading foot out as you start to come up from the bottom position' says McKenzie. 'It will help you to maintain balance and good form.'



BOX PISTOL

MAKE IT EASIER

PRO TIP

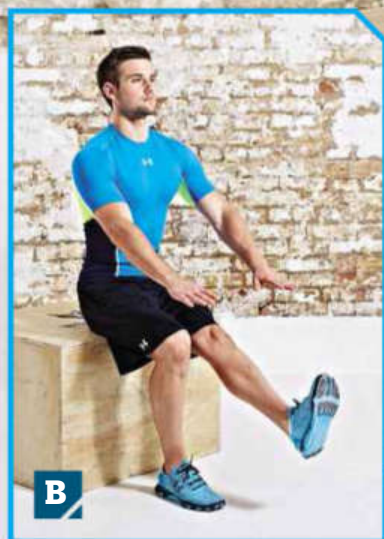
'Once you're comfortable, allow a gap between your bum and the box big enough to slide an envelope through,' says McKenzie. 'Once you can do that, start using a slightly lower box. Rinse and repeat.'

WHY DO IT?

'Making an exercise easier while maintaining the movement pattern is key to progression,' says McKenzie. 'Using a box to balance on when you reach the bottom position is a great way to learn how to lower your body under control. Once you've got that mastered, take the box away and focus on maintaining balance at the bottom too.'

THE MOVE

- o Find a box that's as low as you can comfortably go. Stand 15cm in front of it in the starting position for the pistol.
- o Lower yourself as slowly as you can to build your balance as much as possible and avoid reaching for the box.
- o When you reach the box, let it take some of your weight and hold the position for a few seconds.
- o Drive through the heel of your supporting leg to return to standing, keeping your leading leg extended.



SUPPORTED PISTOL

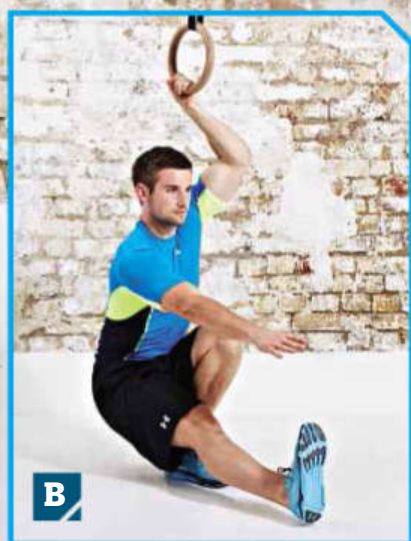
**MAKE IT
EASIER**

WHY DO IT?

'While the box pistol helps you work on balance, this variation develops the strength and range of motion needed to do a pistol correctly,' says McKenzie.

THE MOVE

- o Stand in the starting position for the pistol holding a gymnastic ring or suspension trainer handle in the hand opposite your leading leg. Keep the grip light to avoid leaning back too much.
- o Perform a pistol squat, slowing the move down as much as possible and using the ring for support as little as you can.
- o Hold the bottom position for a few seconds before driving through your supporting heel to stand. Keep your leading leg as straight as possible.

**B****A**

PRO TIP

'Switching legs in the bottom position and holding each for a few seconds is a great way to work on mobility and the strength needed to support the body with only one leg,' says McKenzie.

BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

WHY DO IT?

'We spend a lifetime moving from one foot to the other,' says McKenzie. 'It makes perfect sense to ensure that left equals right in terms of control, strength and balance. The Bulgarian split squat is the perfect tool for training all three aspects.'

THE MOVE

- o Stand facing away from a knee-high box or bar and rest one foot on it.
- o Lower your body until your hips are in line with the box or bar. Maintain a straight line from your hips to your head. Puffing your chest out and looking straight ahead will help.
- o Drive through the heel of your supporting foot to return to standing.

PRO TIP

'Relax your back leg as much as possible,' says McKenzie. 'This move is supposed to build single-leg strength and tensing your back leg will only make the motion more difficult.'



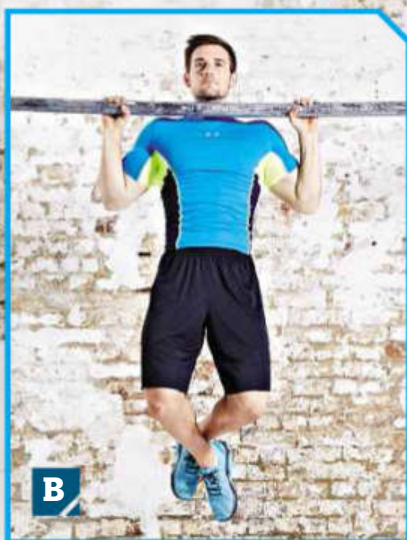
PULL-UP

WHY DO IT?

'The pull-up is one of the most challenging bodyweight moves,' says McKenzie. 'If someone tells you bodyweight exercises aren't strength training, ask them to do ten clean reps and watch the smirk dissolve from their face.'

THE MOVE

- o Hold the bar with your hands in line with your shoulders.
- o Bring your chest towards the bar by forcing your elbows down while holding the bar so tight it's as if you want to crush it. Maintain tension in your core and glutes throughout the move, and keep your legs crossed behind you to avoid the temptation to swing and use momentum to cheat.
- o Once your chin is over the bar, slowly lower yourself back to the start.



PRO TIP

'Always start from a dead hang with your arms locked out,' says McKenzie. 'There's no point in cheating. If you're really struggling to get through a set, jump to the top position and slowly lower yourself rather than quitting entirely.'

BURPEE

WHY DO IT?

'Like the press-up, this move can be done absolutely anywhere,' says McKenzie. 'Unlike the press-up, it's a total-body move that builds killer cardio endurance and is one of the best fat-burning exercises.'

THE MOVE

- o From a standing start, lower into a deep squat and place your hands on the floor.
- o Force both legs back, putting you in a press-up position. Lower your body until your chest and hips touch the floor at the same time to keep your body in line.
- o Drive up through your hips, jumping your feet back in towards your hands. Stand up and jump just high enough for your feet to leave the floor.



PRO TIP

'Each time you shoot your legs back, you must keep your gut and butt tight to reduce the force going through the lumbar spine,' says McKenzie.

D

BOX JUMP

WHY DO IT?

'This is a brilliant way to build the kind of lower-body explosiveness that has all sorts of practical applications, from sprinting to Olympic weightlifting,' says McKenzie.

THE MOVE

- o Stand in front of a box with your feet hip-width apart and a slight bend in your knees.
- o Spring up through the balls of your feet, push your hips forwards and drive your arms upwards.
- o Land softly by distributing your weight through your ankles, knees and hips before standing up and dropping back down.



PRO TIP

'Choose a box height you are confident you can make at first,' says McKenzie. 'If you want up the stakes, use a soft box so you don't bash your shins. You'll usually find you can jump higher with soft boxes too because any shred of fear is eliminated.'

SINGLE-LEG BOX JUMP

MAKE IT
HARDER

WHY DO IT?

'Developing single-leg power is one of the best ways to transfer what you do in the gym to sports such as football or any running-based activity,' says McKenzie.

THE MOVE

- o Choose a box lower than one you would use for a box jump.
- o Stand on one leg in front of the box and swing your raised leg out behind you.
- o As you swing it forwards, keep your chin and chest up and explode on to the box using your back leg's momentum.
- o Hold your landing position for a few seconds before stepping back down.



PRO TIP

'If you're finding balance an issue, make sure you keep your eyes focused on one spot ahead of you the whole time,' says McKenzie. 'It works like a charm.'

DEPTH JUMP

WHY DO IT?

'This was developed by the Russian military. The shock created by the landing engages your muscles more than just jumping off flat ground to help build better explosive strength,' says McKenzie.

THE MOVE

- o Stand on a box with your toes hanging over the edge. Step off (don't jump - the momentum will shift your body forwards) and drop straight down.
- o Bend at the knees to absorb the impact and launch straight into a vertical jump using the force created by your landing.

PRO TIP

'Keep your core tight and hold your breath as you land, even more so during take off,' says McKenzie. 'Timing is also key - make sure the landing and upwards spring are all one motion.'

A





SKIPPING

WHY DO IT?

'Skipping isn't just for playing double Dutch,' says McKenzie. 'It improves mental focus as well as coordination, lower-limb strength, cardio fitness and timing.'

THE MOVE

- Start with the rope behind your heels and keep your elbows as close to your sides as you possible to help maintain the length of the rope as you skip.
- Movement comes from the wrist, not the whole arm. As the rope moves overhead, time your jump. You only need to clear the floor by a few centimetres.

PRO TIP

'Relax and you'll find a rhythm. Tense up and you'll probably end up whipping your feet,' says McKenzie. 'If you're finding it tough at first, swing the rope to one side so you can get the rhythm down.'



DOUBLE-UNDER

MAKE IT
HARDER

WHY DO IT?

'The double-under is the first skipping trick anyone learns and the best,' says McKenzie. 'Whipping the rope under you twice during one jump requires superb timing and extra-high ground clearance.'

THE MOVE

- Perform single skips to get into a rhythm. Once you're comfortable, attempt a double-under.
- Jump high just before the rope hits the floor in front of you, and use your wrists to swing the rope fast to get it round twice before you land.
- Build your confidence by following your first double-under with some singles before trying another.



PRO TIP

'Start by jumping higher than you need to,' says McKenzie. 'This will tire you out quicker but will give you a good feel for what it takes to swing the rope twice. You'll find it isn't as difficult as you think and you can start lowering your jumps accordingly.'

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BARBELL MOVES

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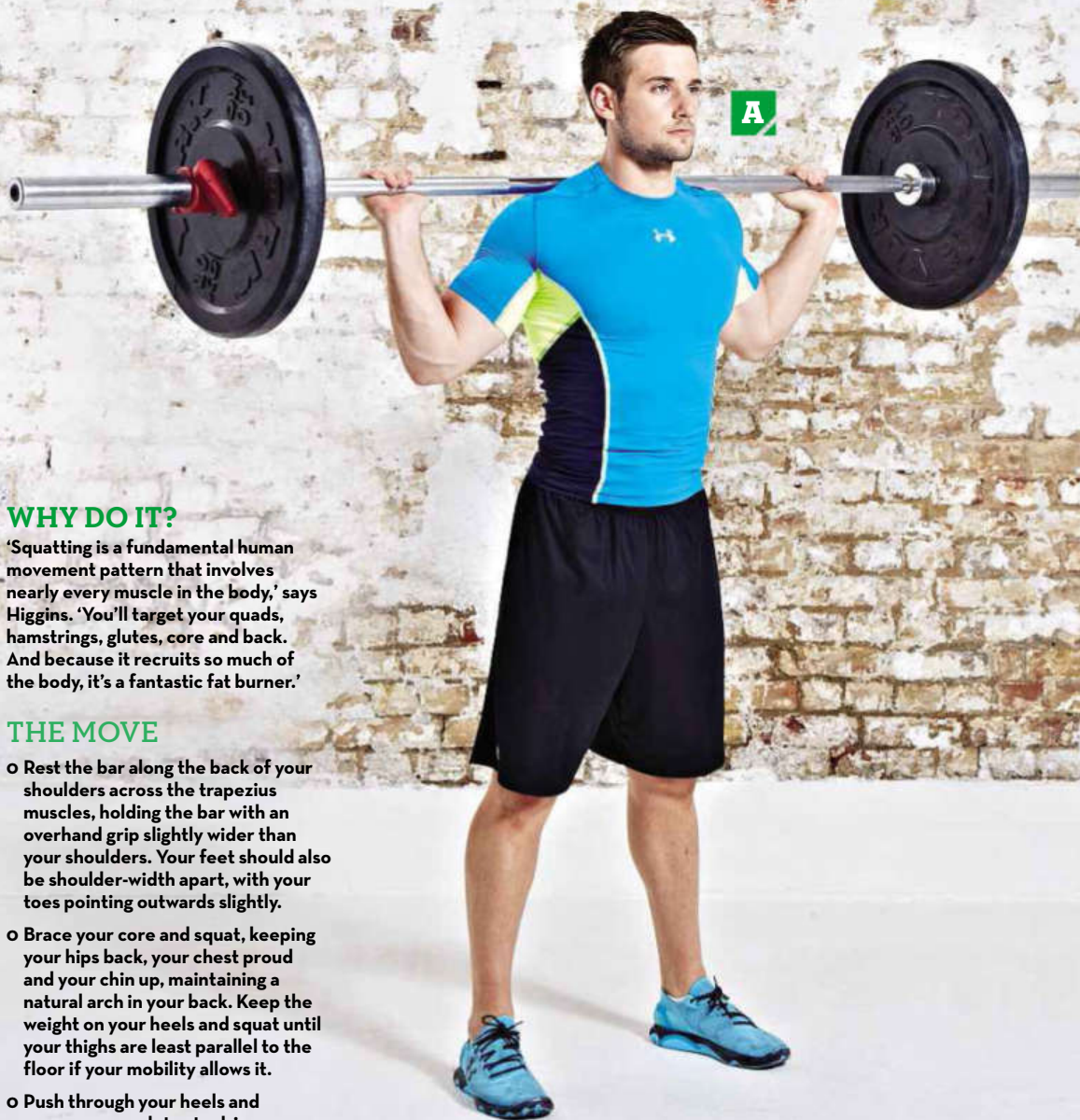
THE COACH

Glenn Higgins has trained everyone from former international rugby players to world championship level kayakers. Barbells feature heavily in his workouts because they recruit stabilising muscles left unused when training with machines.

His company, Glenn Higgins Fitness (glennhigginsfitness.com), focuses on functional training and highlights the importance of good mobility as part of a healthy lifestyle. His high-intensity interval training series on Instagram, HIIT The Roof ([instagram.com/glennhigginsfitness](https://www.instagram.com/glennhigginsfitness)) shows how functional training can be carried out anywhere, not just in the gym.



BACK SQUAT



WHY DO IT?

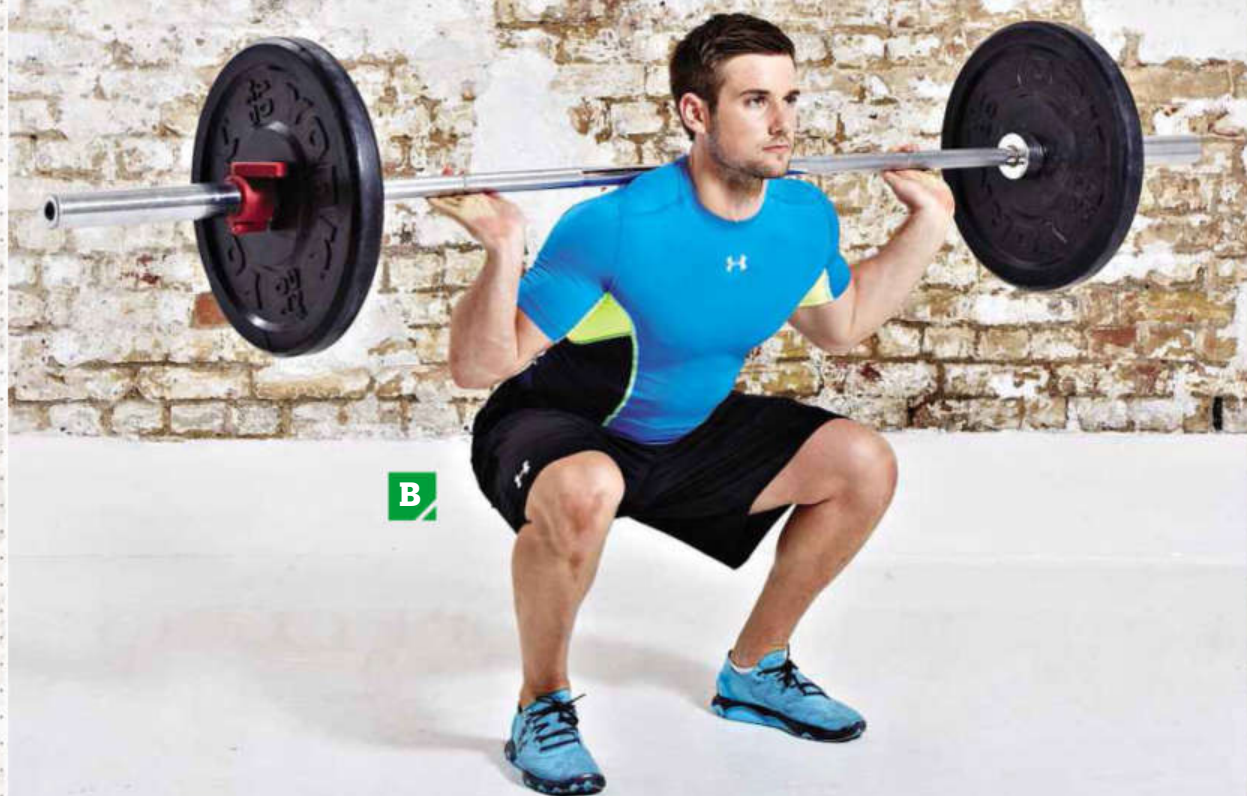
'Squatting is a fundamental human movement pattern that involves nearly every muscle in the body,' says Higgins. 'You'll target your quads, hamstrings, glutes, core and back. And because it recruits so much of the body, it's a fantastic fat burner.'

THE MOVE

- Rest the bar along the back of your shoulders across the trapezius muscles, holding the bar with an overhand grip slightly wider than your shoulders. Your feet should also be shoulder-width apart, with your toes pointing outwards slightly.
- Brace your core and squat, keeping your hips back, your chest proud and your chin up, maintaining a natural arch in your back. Keep the weight on your heels and squat until your thighs are least parallel to the floor if your mobility allows it.
- Push through your heels and squeeze your glutes to drive back up to standing.

PRO TIP

'As you drive back up, imagine screwing your feet out and into the ground,' says Higgins. 'This will activate your glutes and give you more power.'



B

FRONT SQUAT



WHY DO IT?

'The front squat is essential to performing the Olympic clean and a is great way to develop lower-body and core strength,' says Higgins. 'It has many of the same qualities as a regular squat but holding the bar in the "rack" position demands more core strength and stabilisation.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with the bar across your collarbones, with your elbows pointing forwards. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart with your toes pointed outwards slightly.
- Brace your core and squat until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor, keeping your hips back, your chest proud and your chin up, and maintaining a natural arch in your back. Keep your elbows raised as much as your mobility allows so the bar remains in the correct position.
- Push through your heels and squeeze your glutes to drive back up to standing.

PRO TIP

'Accessory work for the supporting muscle groups will help to improve your front squat. Include upper-back exercises so you can effectively support the weight,' says Higgins. 'Exercises such as rows, pull-ups, face-pulls and scapula retractions will help you to maintain a proper rack position.'

B



THRUSTER



WHY DO IT?

'The thruster, which combines a front squat with an overhead press, is king when it comes to compound, multi-joint exercises,' says Higgins. 'This huge move creates head-to-toe strength and power. It's a full-body movement that forces you to generate a lot of power and requires good mobility.'

THE MOVE

- Start with the bar across your collarbones with your elbows pointing forwards. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart with your toes pointed outwards slightly.
- Brace your core and squat until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor, keeping your hips back, your chest proud and chin up, maintaining a natural arch in your back. Your elbows should remain raised to keep the bar in the correct position.
- Push through your heels and squeeze your glutes to drive back up to standing. Use the force you've created in the squat to drive the bar overhead until you can lock out your arms with the barbell over and slightly behind your head.
- Lower the weight under control and descend into the next squat in one continuous motion.



C



B

PRO TIP

'Save your arms from doing all the work by using your hips and legs to generate the power to get the bar overhead - drive your knees out and push up forcefully to generate momentum,' says Higgins. 'And don't leave the bar in front of your head at the top of the lift - it will make the exercise unnecessarily hard. Activate your shoulders and keep it pulled back by your ears and over your heels.'

OVERHEAD SQUAT



WHY DO IT?

'The overhead squat is an important tool for training the strength and stability of your shoulders and core,' says Higgins. 'It's also a vital tool to mobilise your thoracic spine, ankles and hips, and will help you feel more comfortable at the very bottom of a squat, front squat or snatch.'

THE MOVE

- Hold the bar above your head with a wide grip, your hands towards each end. The bar should be directly above your ankles with your arms fully extended, and your feet should be a little more than shoulder-width apart with your toes pointed outwards slightly.
- Brace your core and squat until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor, keeping your hips back, your chest proud and chin up, maintaining a natural arch in your back. Keep your arms locked overhead.
- As your squat, pull the bar back to keep it directly over your heels - don't let it move forwards or behind your heels. Drive through your heels to stand.

PRO TIP

'Mobility and technique are crucial to the overhead squat,' says Higgins. 'Before you even think about loading weight on to the bar, make sure you've got your form down by practising the move with a broomstick or length of PVC pipe.'



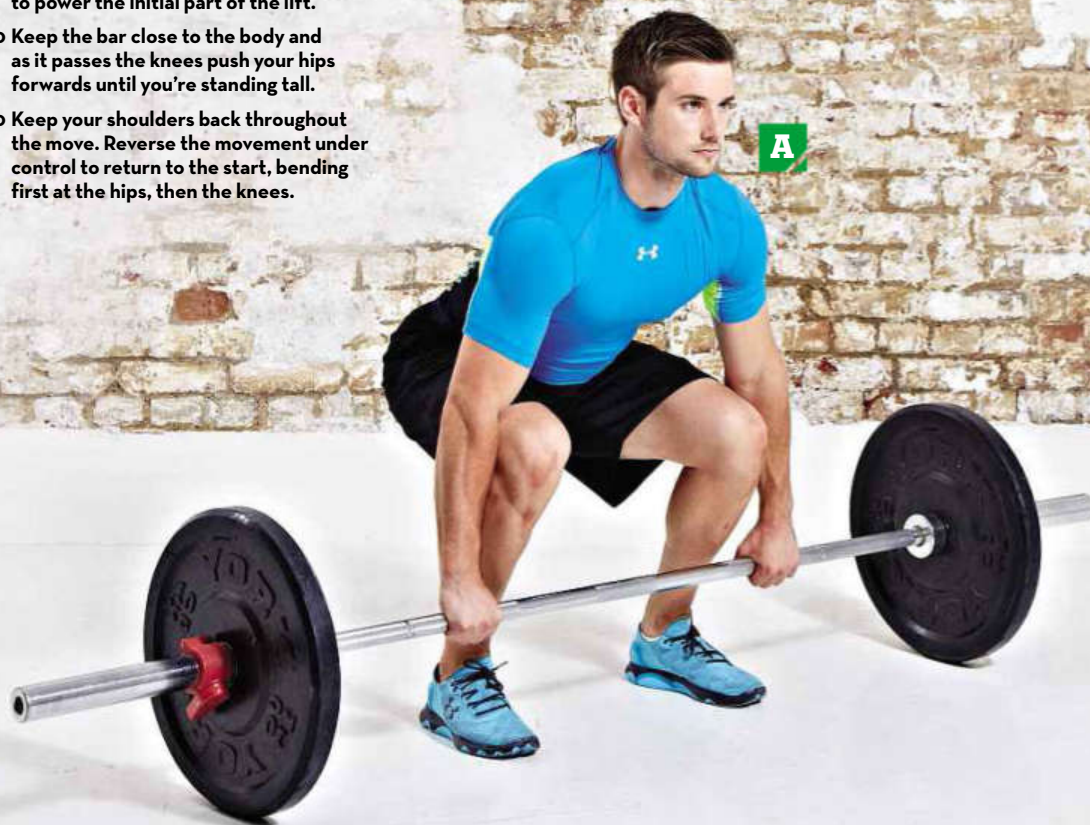
DEADLIFT

WHY DO IT?

'The deadlift is one of the most efficient exercises when it comes to building strength, power and a solid core,' says Higgins. 'When performed properly, it will also go a long way in helping you improve your posture and aiding injury prevention.'

THE MOVE

- o Stand in front of the bar with your shins touching it and your feet shoulder-width apart. Squat and grip the bar with either an overhand grip or an alternate grip just outside your thighs.
- o With your shoulders retracted and over the bar, brace your core keeping a natural arch in your back. Drive your heels into the floor and use your legs and glutes to power the initial part of the lift.
- o Keep the bar close to the body and as it passes the knees push your hips forwards until you're standing tall.
- o Keep your shoulders back throughout the move. Reverse the movement under control to return to the start, bending first at the hips, then the knees.



PRO TIP

'Make sure your shoulders stay pulled back and your back doesn't "round" - that's a one-way ticket to injury,' says Higgins. 'If you struggle to lift a weight use a mixed grip, with one palm facing away from you.'



B

DEADLIFT VARIATIONS

ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

WHY DO IT?

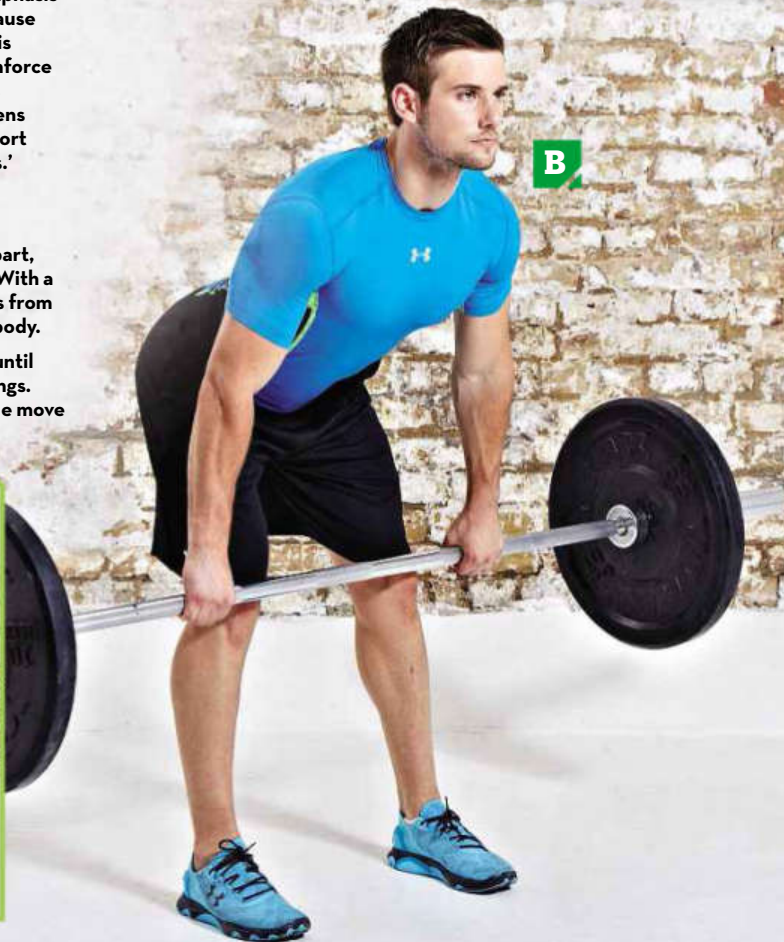
'This strengthens the back arch as well as the glutes and hamstrings, but places less emphasis on the latter than a stiff-leg deadlift because the knees remain bent,' says Higgins. 'This bend means the move can be used to reinforce the knee movement found in lifts such as snatches and clean pulls. It also strengthens the lats and shoulders because of the effort required to keep the bar close to the legs.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding the bar with an overhand grip. With a slight bend in the knees, bend forwards from the hips keeping the bar close to your body.
- Lower the bar down to your mid-shins until you feel a good stretch in your hamstrings. Push your hips forwards and reverse the move back to the start.

PRO TIP

'Keep your chin down and eyes forwards to get more "pop" out of your deadlift,' says Higgins. 'If you're looking at the ceiling, not only will you lose glutes and hamstring strength off the floor, you'll also be unable to use your glutes and hips to finish the weight at the top of the lift.'



SNATCH-GRIP DEADLIFT

WHY DO IT?

'This variation forces you into a lower squat, putting more emphasis on the entire back, hamstrings and glutes,' says Higgins. 'It can also be used as a remedial exercise to practise balance and position in the pull or as part of a learning progression for the snatch.'

THE MOVE

- o This move is similar to a standard deadlift, but with a much wider grip on the bar. Shift your weight back slightly more towards the heels as you lift the bar and maintain this angle until the bar reaches your middle thighs.
- o When the bar reaches your upper thigh, your shoulders should be at least slightly in front of the bar. Fully extend your knees and hips to stand with the bar at arm's length, keeping your quads, glutes and abs tight. Return the bar to the floor under control.

A

B

STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT

WHY DO IT?

'The stiff-leg deadlift puts a lot of emphasis on the hamstrings,' says Higgins. 'It differs from the Romanian deadlift in that the knees start fully extended and unlock slightly as part of the forward hinge rather than remaining bent.'

THE MOVE

- o Start in the same position as the Romanian deadlift. Keep your chest high, core braced and knees straight without locking them. Bend forwards from the hips and let the bar drift naturally slightly away from the body.
- o Pause when you feel a good stretch then reverse the motion, contracting the glutes and hamstrings so the bar comes closer to the body as you straighten. Finish by pushing your hips forwards and squeezing your glutes.

A

B

OVERHEAD PRESS



WHY DO IT?

'The overhead press is a full-body compound exercise,' says Higgins. 'Your shoulders and arms press the weight over your head while your legs, lower back and abs keep you balanced. It's one of the best exercises to build strong, muscular and healthy shoulders along with bigger arms. It will also improve your power in other lifts.'

THE MOVE

- o Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart with the bar positioned across your upper chest, gripping it with your hands a little wider than your feet.
- o Keeping your core braced and your chest proud, press the bar straight up until your arms are fully extended overhead with the bar aligned with your heels, hips and shoulders. You should feel as if you're pulling the bar back slightly while pushing your head forwards. Make sure your hips don't tilt forwards.
- o Reverse the move under control to return to the start.



B

PRO TIP

'Keep your core and glutes braced throughout to provide maximum stability,' says Higgins.

PRESS VARIATIONS

PUSH PRESS



A

WHY DO IT?

'The push press is similar to the overhead press but you use your legs to assist the move, creating momentum,' says Higgins. 'This allows you to lift heavier, priming your muscles for maximum growth.'

THE MOVE

- o Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart with the bar positioned across your upper chest, gripping it with your hands a little wider than your feet.
- o Keeping your core braced and chest proud, bend your knees slightly then stand up straight to generate momentum. As you do so, press the bar straight up until your arms are fully extended with the bar aligned with your heels, hips and shoulders. You should feel as though you're pulling the bar back slightly and pushing your head forwards. Make sure your hips don't tilt forwards.
- o Reverse the move under control to return to the start.

PRO TIP

'Exhale through the upwards movement and inhale during the downwards movement,' says Higgins. 'This is critical for increasing and maintaining a secure torso while under heavy loads.'



B

MILITARY PRESS

WHY DO IT?

'This requires you to push the weight up using just your shoulders,' says Higgins. 'The extra balance this requires means you activate your core a lot more than in a regular overhead press.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with your feet together holding the bar across your upper chest with your hands a little more than shoulder-width apart.
- Keeping your core braced and your chest proud, press the bar straight up until your arms are fully extended with the bar aligned with your heels, hips and shoulders. Make sure your hips don't tilt forwards.
- Reverse the move under control to return to the start.



PUSH JERK

WHY DO IT?

'The jerk involves more knee and hip drive, which improves the explosive power that's important in sport,' says Higgins.

THE MOVE

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart holding the bar across your upper chest with your hands a little more than shoulder-width apart.
- Press the bar up explosively. As your hips fully extend, drop underneath the bar, catching it with your arms straight and your hips and knees slightly flexed.
- Stand up. The power you've created should cause your feet to leave the ground.



POWER CLEAN

WHY DO IT?

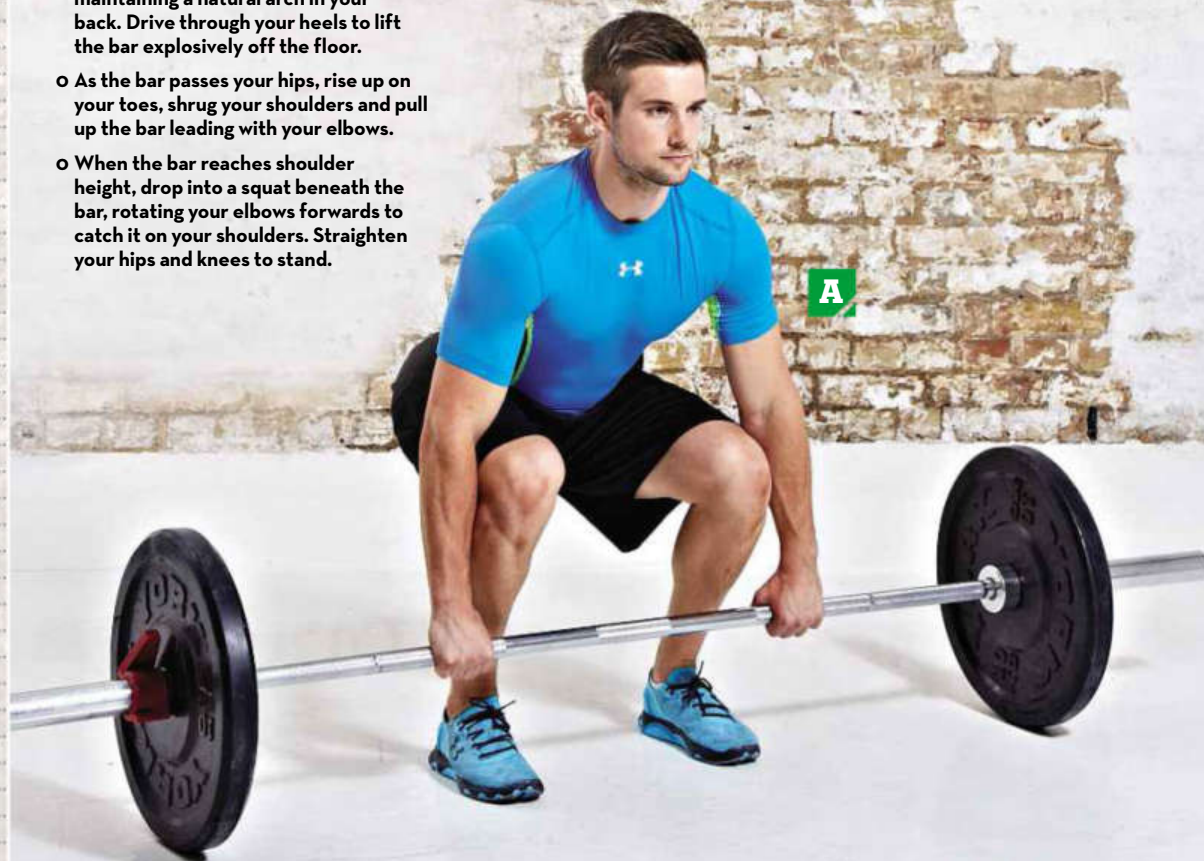
'The power clean is a lift that builds full-body power and tests the ability to move quickly and explosively,' says Higgins. 'Nailing this move will help you to build explosive power that can help in many sports and everyday activities.'

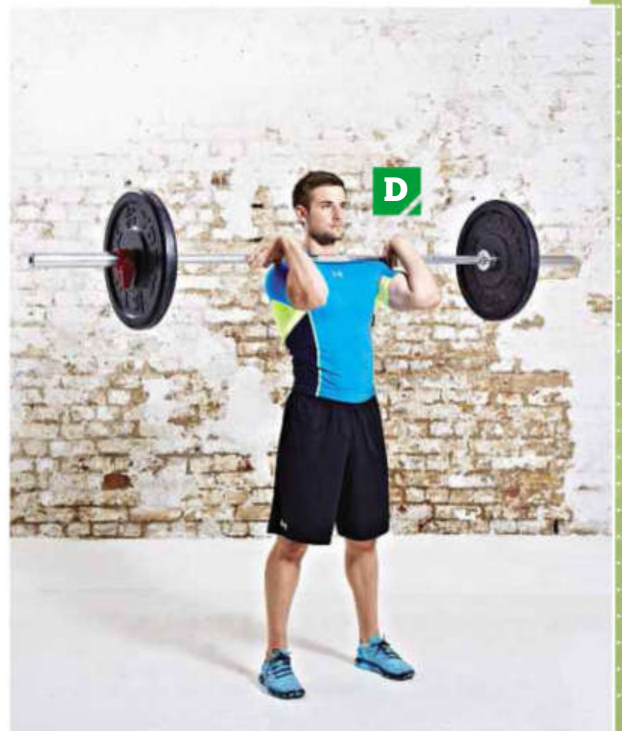
THE MOVE

- o Stand in front of the bar with your feet shoulder-width apart. Squat and grab the bar with an overhand grip with your hands just outside your knees.
- o Keep your core braced, head up, chest proud and shoulders back, maintaining a natural arch in your back. Drive through your heels to lift the bar explosively off the floor.
- o As the bar passes your hips, rise up on your toes, shrug your shoulders and pull up the bar leading with your elbows.
- o When the bar reaches shoulder height, drop into a squat beneath the bar, rotating your elbows forwards to catch it on your shoulders. Straighten your hips and knees to stand.

PRO TIP

'Keep the bar as close to your body as possible as you pull the bar upwards,' says Higgins. 'This makes the movement more efficient in allowing you to duck underneath to catch it.'





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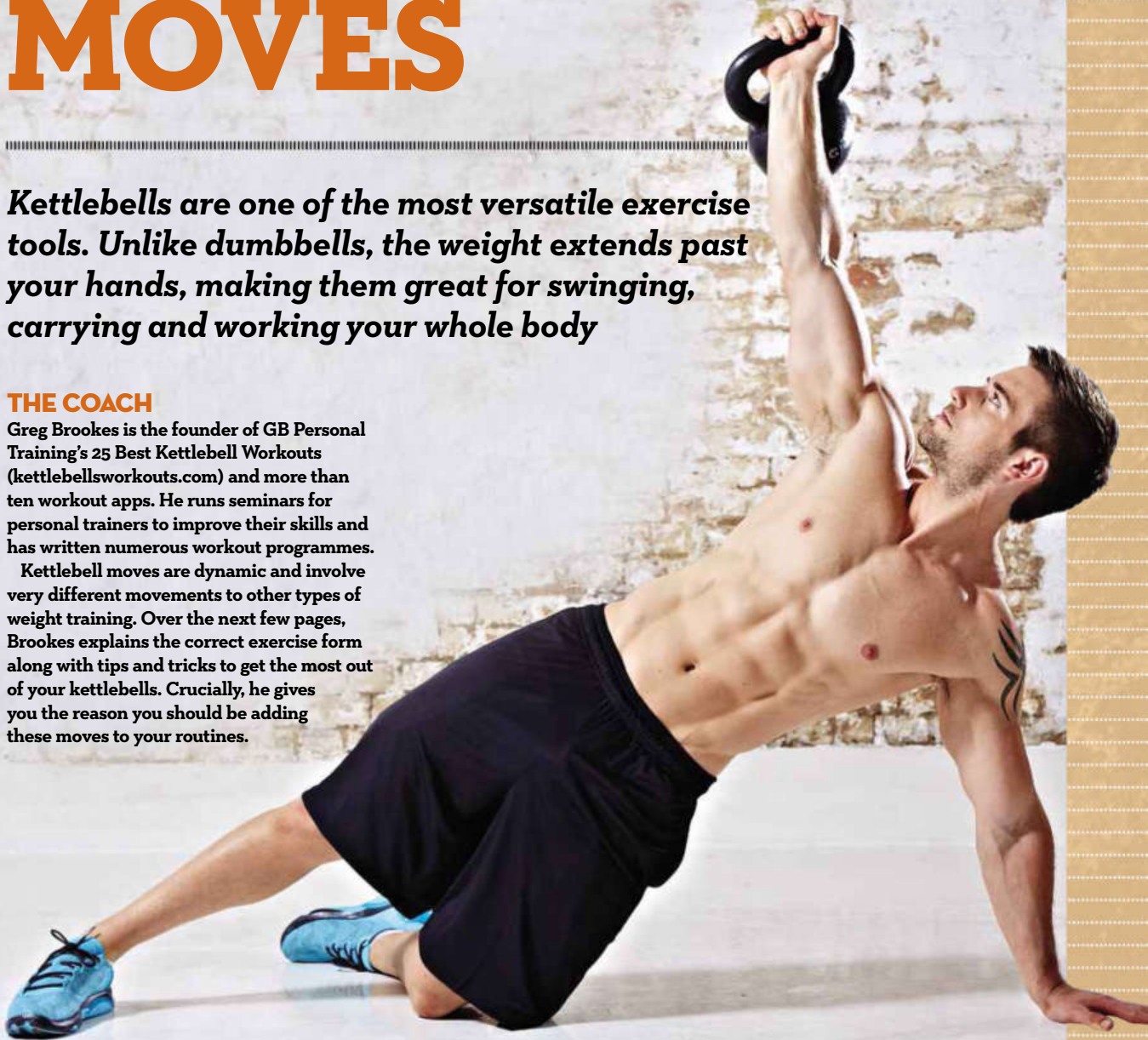
KETTLEBELL MOVES

Kettlebells are one of the most versatile exercise tools. Unlike dumbbells, the weight extends past your hands, making them great for swinging, carrying and working your whole body

THE COACH

Greg Brookes is the founder of GB Personal Training's 25 Best Kettlebell Workouts (kettlebellsworkouts.com) and more than ten workout apps. He runs seminars for personal trainers to improve their skills and has written numerous workout programmes.

Kettlebell moves are dynamic and involve very different movements to other types of weight training. Over the next few pages, Brookes explains the correct exercise form along with tips and tricks to get the most out of your kettlebells. Crucially, he gives you the reason you should be adding these moves to your routines.



GOBLET SQUAT

WHY DO IT?

'The squat is one of our most primal movement patterns and targets most muscles in the body,' says Brookes. 'Everyone should squat, and the goblet squat offers additional stabilising benefits for the upper body as well as lower.'

THE MOVE

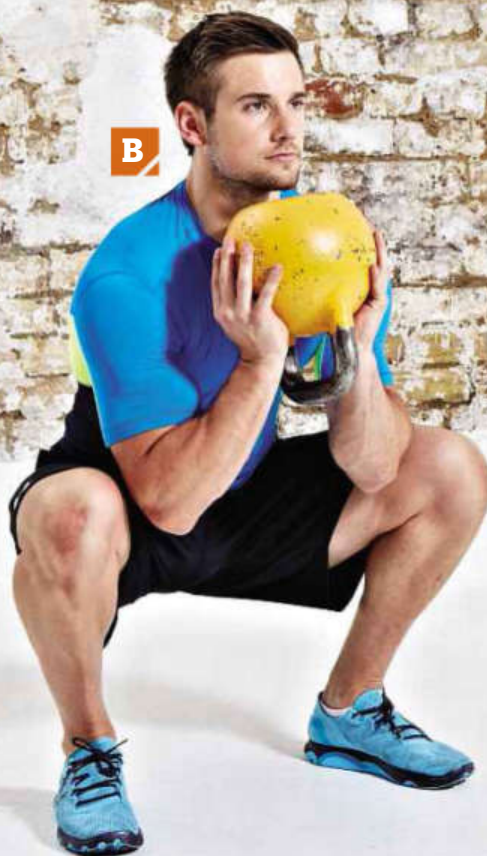
- Hold the kettlebell upside down at chest height, your elbows tucked in to your sides.
- Squat, keeping your weight on your heels and the outside of your feet to activate your glutes.
- Drive through your heels to return to standing.



PRO TIP

'Keep your elbows tucked in and lats engaged throughout the movement - even as you get tired, keep focusing on your elbow position,' says Brookes. 'And don't become quad-dominant. Ensure you squat so your thighs are parallel to the floor - failing to do so won't activate your glutes sufficiently and focus too much on your quads.'

B



SWING

WHY DO IT?

'The swing is the king of kettlebell exercises,' says Brookes. 'It develops explosive strength in the hips as well as strengthening the posterior chain and postural muscles. It's a very good exercise for counteracting a day of sitting.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with your feet a little more than shoulder-width apart with your toes pointing outwards slightly.
- Keeping your back flat, drive the kettlebell from between your legs up to chest height using your hips and glutes to create the power and not your shoulders.
- As the kettlebell comes back between your legs, keep your weight back on your heels and allow your hamstrings to absorb the resistance.



**PRO TIP**

'Never lean back during the top part of the swing - aggressively stand tall as if pushing the crown of your head to the ceiling,' says Brookes. 'Keep your shoulders back and don't let the bell pull you forwards. You're the boss!'

SWING VARIATIONS

ONE-ARM SWING

PRO TIP

'Load your posterior chain by keeping your weight back on your heels,' says Brookes. 'Training in bare feet or footwear without a heel will ensure you load the back of your body more effectively.'

WHY DO IT?

'You get the same benefits as the two-hand swing plus a bit more,' says Brookes. 'Using just one hand puts more torque through your body, emphasising the amount of core engagement as well as improving grip and shoulder stabilisation.'

THE MOVE

- o Use the same technique as with the two-hand swing, only holding the bell with just one hand.
- o Keep your shoulder back and avoid rotating your body. As you swing the kettlebell back between your legs, don't let it go back any further than your wrist.



AMERICAN SWING

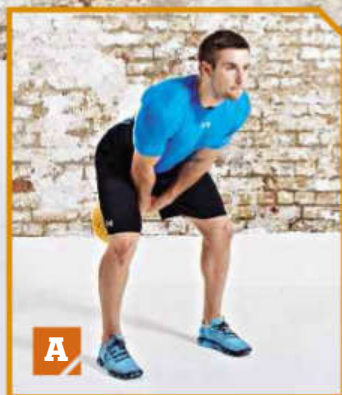
WHY DO IT?

'In the American swing, the kettlebell travels above your head so there's a lot more work involved,' says Brookes.

'However, it's a controversial move because many people don't have the shoulder mobility to perform it safely.'

THE MOVE

- o Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding the top of the kettlebell handle in both hands in front of your thighs. Look forwards, with your head up, chest out and hips back.
- o Fold at the hips, keeping your weight over the middle of your foot, slightly toward your heels. Your knees will bend slightly, which is normal. If you're doing it correctly, you'll feel your hamstrings rather than your quads as you swing the kettlebell back between your thighs.
- o Push your hips forwards to stand upright again, and swing your arms until they're pointing directly upwards. Let them drop to the start, bending slightly at the hips again.



SNATCH

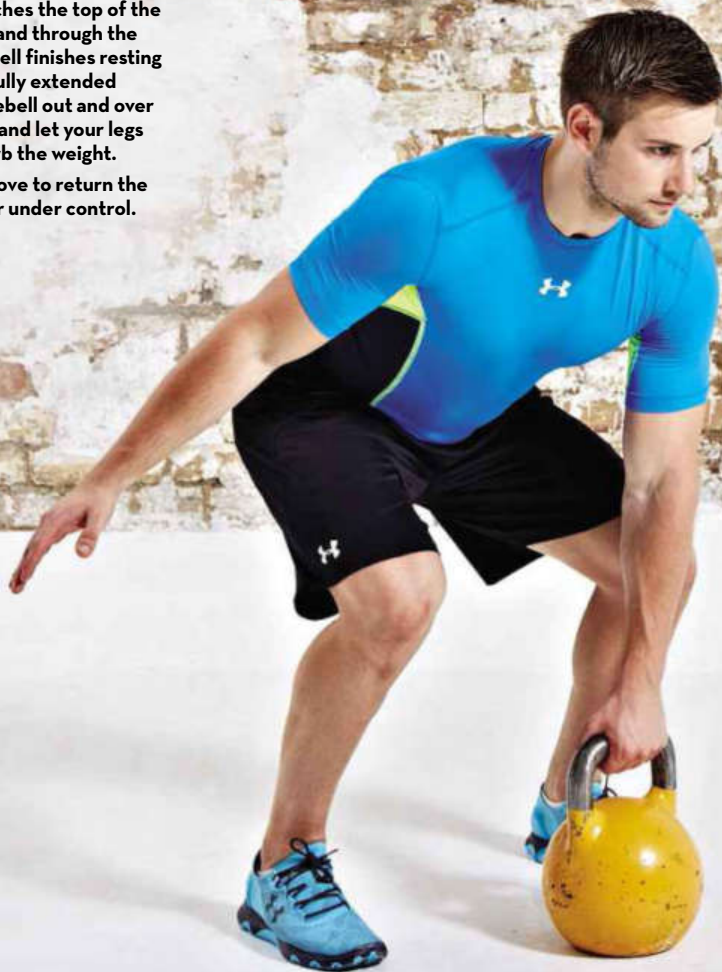
WHY DO IT?

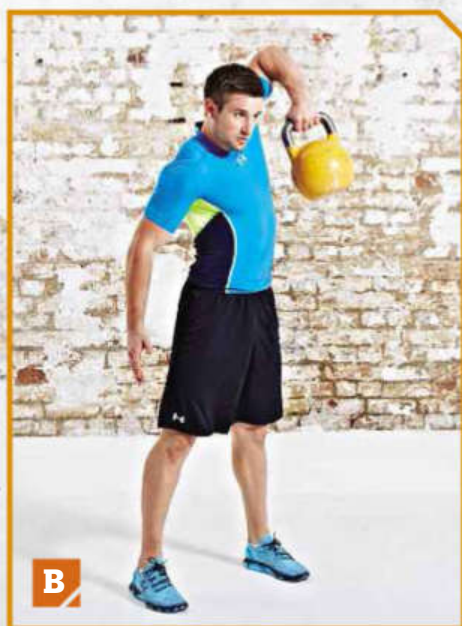
'This large and explosive exercise develops power and all-over body strength,' says Brookes. 'It's also really good for improving your cardio.'

THE MOVE

- Stand with your feet slightly more than shoulder-width apart in front of a kettlebell. Take hold of the handle with one hand, and use your hips and glutes to drive the kettlebell up, keeping it close to your body.
- As the kettlebell reaches the top of the snatch, punch your hand through the handle so the kettlebell finishes resting on the back of your fully extended arm. Throw the kettlebell out and over the back of the hand and let your legs and hamstrings absorb the weight.
- Slowly reverse the move to return the kettlebell to the floor under control.

A





PRO TIP

'The snatch is unlike the swing in that the kettlebell doesn't move in a perfect arc,' says Brookes. 'Imagine you're facing a wall so you can't swing the kettlebell too far outwards. Keep the bell close and work on your timing as the bell comes over your hand at the top.'

CLEAN AND PRESS

WHY DO IT?

'The clean and press is a full-body power move that uses every muscle to take the kettlebell from the floor to overhead,' says Brookes. 'It's great for building strength and equally useful for developing your cardio.'

THE MOVE

- Drive the kettlebell to the halfway point, the racked position, using your hips and glutes. Always take your arm around the kettlebell rather than the kettlebell around your arm.
- From the racked position, push the kettlebell overhead so you end up with your palms facing away from you.
- Bring the kettlebell down slowly under tension and back to the racked position, before returning the kettlebell to the start.



PRO TIP

'As you press the kettlebell overhead, crush the handle with your grip, brace your abs, squeeze your glutes and tighten your lats,' says Brookes. 'Full-body tension will dramatically increase your strength and solidify your pressing foundation.'

B



C



D



TURKISH GET-UP

WHY DO IT?

'This is the ultimate full-body mobilising and stabilising exercise that will prepare you for anything,' says Brookes. 'You'll build a solid training foundation with this exercise.'

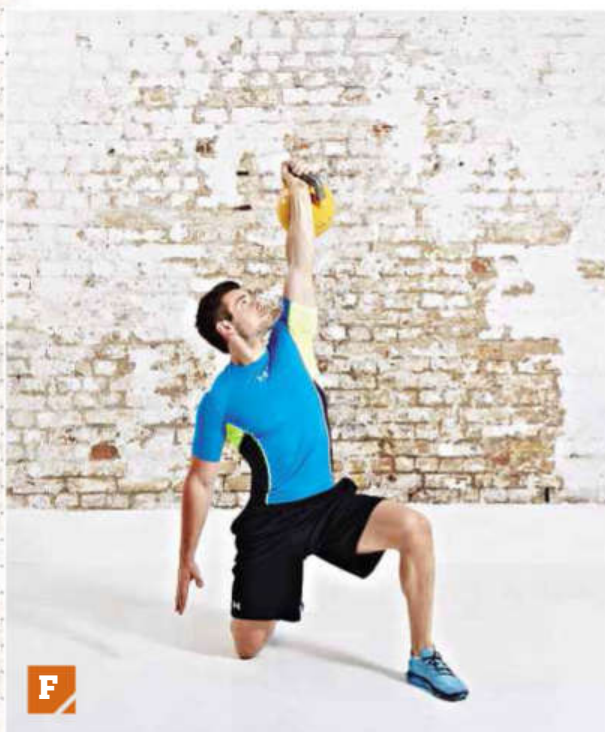
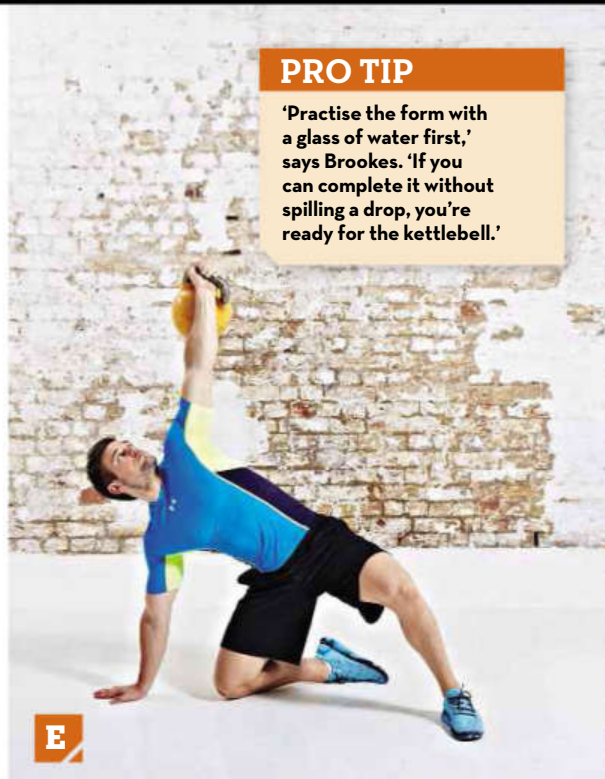
THE MOVE

- Lie on your back, holding the kettlebell in one hand by your shoulder, the leg on the same side bent with your foot flat on the floor, and your other arm at 45° from your body. Press the kettlebell straight up.
- Keeping your lifting arm locked and your eyes on the raised kettlebell at all times, raise your upper body on to your resting forearm. Push through your resting hand and opposite foot to drive your hips upwards, squeezing your glutes.
- Bring your resting leg underneath, lift your resting hand off the floor and come into a half kneeling or lunge position. Stand up.
- Reverse the move slowly to return to the start.



PRO TIP

'Practise the form with a glass of water first,' says Brookes. 'If you can complete it without spilling a drop, you're ready for the kettlebell.'



FARMER'S WALK

WHY DO IT?

'This practical exercise develops shoulder and back strength, as well as working the legs,' says Brookes. 'It's one of the best exercises for improving grip strength too.'

THE MOVE

- o Hold a kettlebell in each hand at your sides with your palms facing your body.
- o Keep your lats tight and shoulders back and down as you walk.
- o Walking for a set period of time, for example three to five sets of 30 seconds.

A

PRO TIP

'To challenge your shoulder stabilisers, grip strength and legs further, walk on uneven ground,' says Brookes. 'Walking up hills will develop your legs and glutes further.'

OVERHEAD CARRY

WHY DO IT?

'If you can't hold it, you shouldn't be pressing it,' says Brookes. 'This move strengthens your shoulder stabilisers and prepares your body for heavy overhead lifting. It also works your abs hard.'

THE MOVE

- Press the kettlebell overhead. Keep your arm locked and shoulder down in its socket. Turn your head from left to right to make sure your neck isn't holding too much tension.
- Hold for up to 60 seconds. When holding becomes easy, walk. When walking is easy, progress to overhead lunges, squats and so on.

B**A**

PRO TIP

'Keep your abs tight throughout,' says Brookes. 'Your abs form a big part of your base of support, and if you don't tense them you'll never be able to stabilise the overhead weight.'

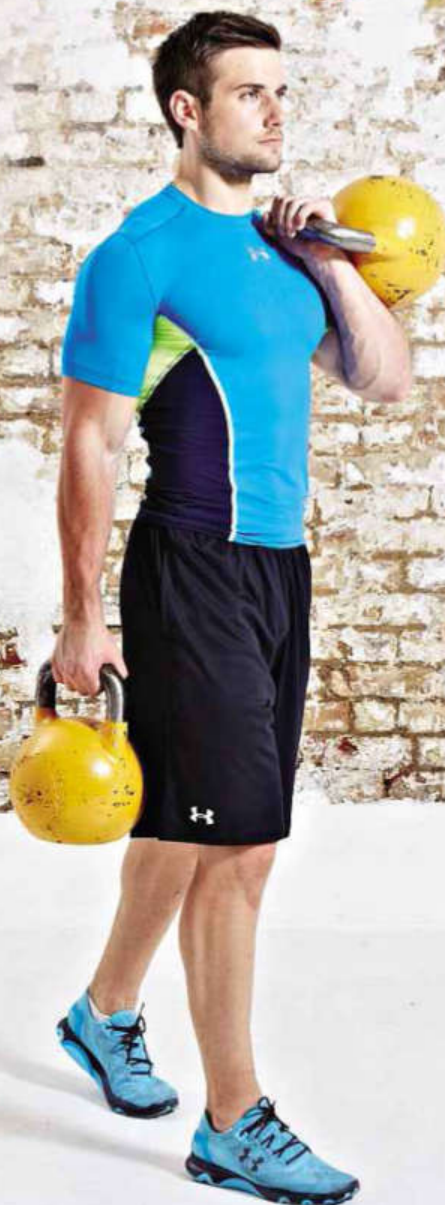
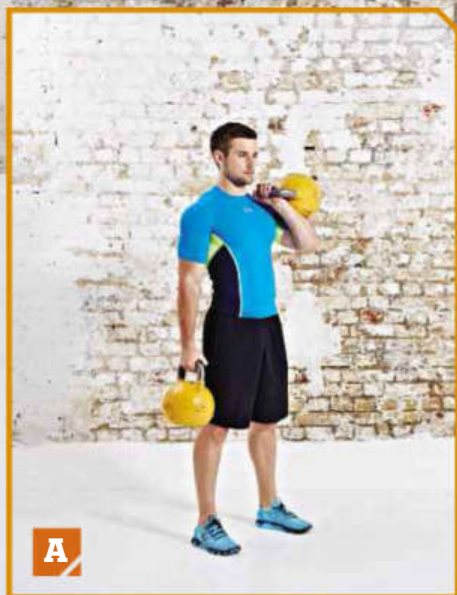
OFFSET CARRY

WHY DO IT?

'The uneven distribution of weight in this move forces your oblique muscles to work harder in order to keep you upright,' says Brookes.

THE MOVE

- o Stand holding one kettlebell by your side and one in the racked position by your shoulder, braced against the back of your wrist.
- o Keep your body upright as you walk, and don't let either weight drag you to one side.
- o Walk for a set amount of time, for example three to five sets of 30 seconds.



WAITER'S WALK

WHY DO IT?

'The balance needed to keep the kettlebell stable in the waiter's walk is demanding on your core and requires stable shoulders,' says Brookes.

THE MOVE

- o Hold the kettlebell on the palm of your hand overhead, as if you were a waiter carrying a tray. Walk forwards.
- o Don't try to go too heavy with this carry, as you need to be able to balance the weight safely.

B**A**

OLYMPIC LIFTING MOVES

Olympic lifts are the ultimate combination of coordination, strength and mobility

THE COACH

Sally Moss is a UK-based strength coach and founder of Strength Ambassadors. As a weightlifting competitor she won bronze at the 2013 British Weightlifting Championships and silver at the 2009 World Drug Free Powerlifting Championships. She now runs regular Olympic lifting workshops for beginners (olympicliftingforbeginners.com).

In this section, Moss explains the correct form for each Olympic lift, as well as several variations that will help you to improve your overall lifting ability. She also explains why each move is worth your time and offers those small technique tips that can turn an average lifter into an excellent one.

SNATCH

The most technical Olympic lift - and the fastest way to get a weight from the ground to overhead - requires a combination of strength, balance and coordination. You should be comfortable with overhead squats before you attempt this move

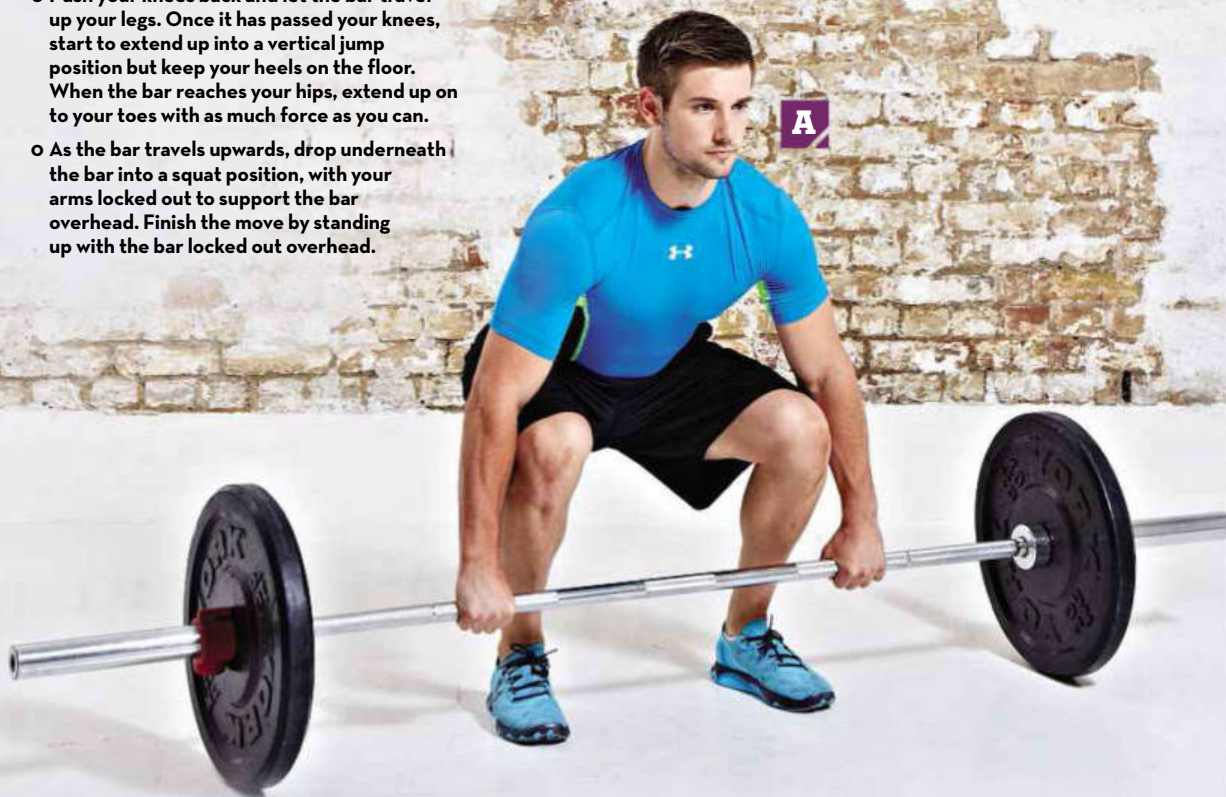
WHY DO IT?

'The snatch develops speed of movement and rate of force production,' says Moss. 'Plus it's a lot of fun to perform.'

THE MOVE

- o Take a wide grip on the bar and bend so your hips are below the level of your shoulders but above your knees. Your shoulders must also be in front of the bar. Think 'armpits over bar' to get the position right.
- o Push your knees back and let the bar travel up your legs. Once it has passed your knees, start to extend up into a vertical jump position but keep your heels on the floor. When the bar reaches your hips, extend up on to your toes with as much force as you can.
- o As the bar travels upwards, drop underneath the bar into a squat position, with your arms locked out to support the bar overhead. Finish the move by standing up with the bar locked out overhead.

A



PRO TIP

'Keep your shoulders over the bar for as long as possible,' says Moss. 'This prevents the bar from swinging away from you.'



CLEAN

This vital strength-building move will teach you how to get weight off the ground and up to your shoulders. Perfect this before you start to combine it with overhead lifts, such as the jerk

WHY DO IT?

'The clean is one of the highest power outputs of any resistance exercise,' says Moss. 'As well as building strength, it will help you to sprint faster and jump higher.'

THE MOVE

- Take a wide grip on the bar and bend so your hips are below the level of your shoulders but above your knees. Your shoulders must also be in front of the bar. Think 'armpits over bar' to get the position right.
- Push your knees back and let the bar travel up your legs. Once it has passed your knees, start to extend up into a vertical jump position but keep your heels on the floor. When the bar reaches your upper thigh, extend up on to your toes with as much force as you can.
- The bar will continue to travel upwards under momentum, while you drop underneath the bar into a squat to catch it on your shoulders. Finish the move by standing up with the bar on your shoulders.

A



PRO TIP

'In the catch, drive your elbows up fast and hard,' says Moss. 'This will make you move faster and prevent you from catching the bar awkwardly.'

B



C



D



JERK

The jerk is probably the least technical Olympic lift, making it a good starting point for beginners. In the Olympics, it is performed as a solo move as well as combined with the clean



WHY DO IT?

'The jerk is vital for developing fast reactions and foot speed under heavy load,' says Moss.

THE MOVE

- o Rest the bar on the front of your shoulders, with your hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart. Dip into a quarter squat, then drive straight up with force so the bar comes off your shoulders.
- o Drop into a split position (one leg forwards, one leg back) and extend your arms rapidly so you catch the bar above your head with your arms locked out and behind your ears. Carefully move your feet back to a standing position.



B



PRO TIP

'When you drop into the split position, drive your chin forwards,' says Moss. 'This keeps the weight of the bar over your hips, the strongest position for it to be in.'

C

SNATCH WARM-UP

Before you attempt a snatch, make sure you're fully prepared with this quick and simple routine from Moss

OVERHEAD SQUAT

SETS **3** REPS **5**
WEIGHT **EMPTY BAR**

- o Take a wide grip on a bar and hold it overhead with your arms locked out.
- o Squat as low as you can, keeping the bar behind your ears.

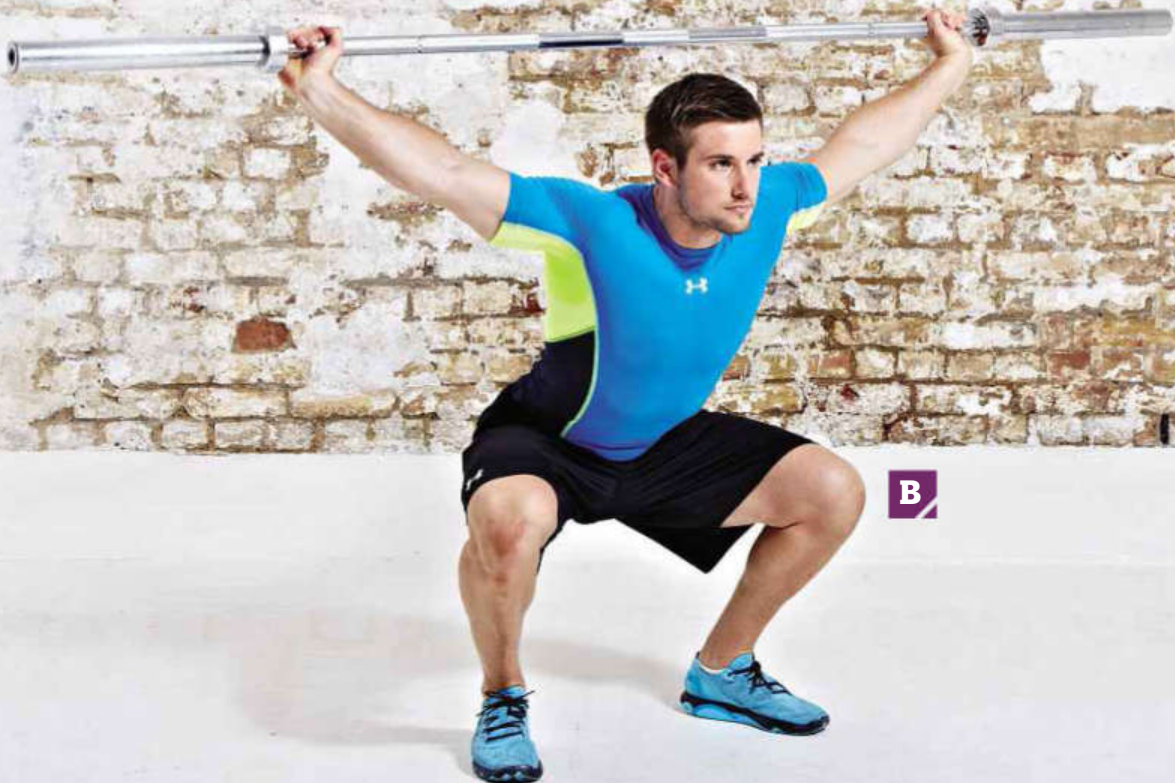


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SNATCH BALANCE

SETS 3 REPS 5
WEIGHT **EMPTY BAR**

- o Rest the bar on your back, holding it with a wide grip as if you were going to squat.
- o Do a quarter squat for momentum, then quickly jump as you push the bar up, locking your arms out, and drop into a full squat.
- o Stand up and return to the start.



CLEAN AND JERK WARM-UP

Get ready for the complex clean and jerk moves with Moss's simple but effective warm-up routine

FRONT SQUAT

SETS 3 REPS 5
WEIGHT **EMPTY BAR**

- o Place the bar on the front of your shoulders with your hands just more than shoulder-width apart.
- o Squat and stand back up, keeping your elbows high throughout.



OVERHEAD PRESS

SETS 3 REPS 5

WEIGHT **EMPTY BAR**

- o Place the bar on the front of your shoulders, with your hands just more than shoulder-width apart.
- o Pull your chin back and press the bar forcefully overhead. Drive your chin forwards under the bar to finish with the bar locked out behind your ears.



SNATCH VARIATIONS

Improve your performance in the Olympic lift with these versions, each of which brings its own benefits

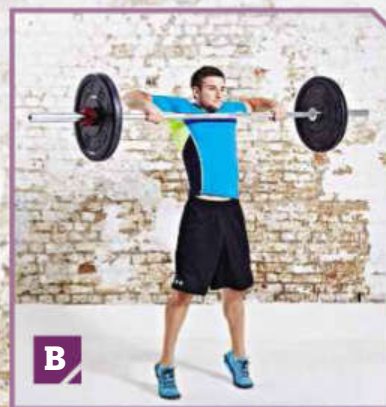
SNATCH HIGH PULL

WHY DO IT?

'This move develops a long, powerful pull,' says Moss. 'The extra momentum will make it easier to get under the bar.'

THE MOVE

- Start in the same position as the snatch. When the bar reaches your hips, extend up on to your toes with as much force as you can and shrug your shoulders hard.
- As the bar travels up, drive your elbows out and up, until the bar reaches your sternum. Don't go under the bar but finish on your toes with your elbows high.



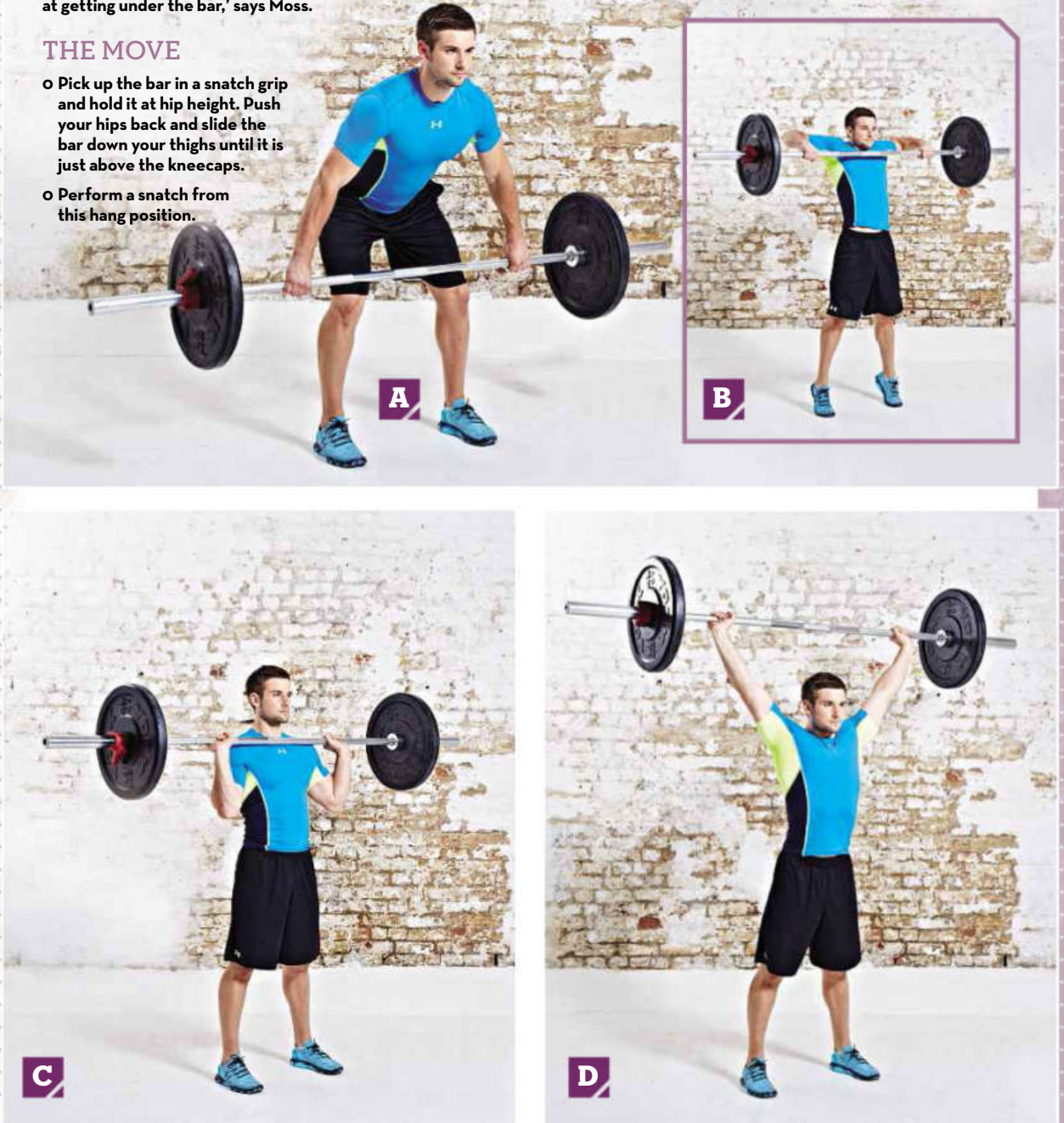
HANG SNATCH

WHY DO IT?

'The hang snatch improves your speed at getting under the bar,' says Moss.

THE MOVE

- o Pick up the bar in a snatch grip and hold it at hip height. Push your hips back and slide the bar down your thighs until it is just above the kneecaps.
- o Perform a snatch from this hang position.



CLEAN VARIATIONS

Can't manage the full lift? Perfect these versions before moving on to the Olympic version

POWER CLEAN

WHY DO IT?

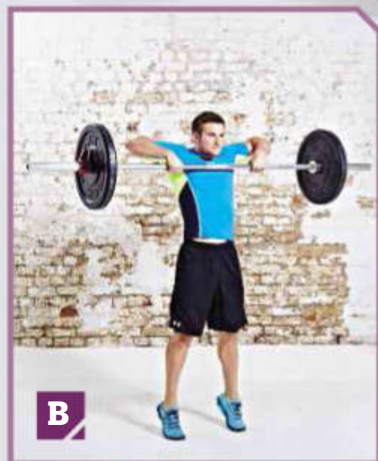
'This requires less mobility than the full clean, as you only go into a quarter squat under the bar,' says Moss. 'However, it still has a high power output, making it ideal for those who don't have quite the full range of movement in their hips'

THE MOVE

- o Start in the clean position. When the bar reaches your upper thigh, extend up on to your toes with as much force as you can.
- o As the bar continues upwards, drop underneath it in a quarter squat to catch it on your shoulders. Stand up with the bar on your shoulders.



A



B



C



D

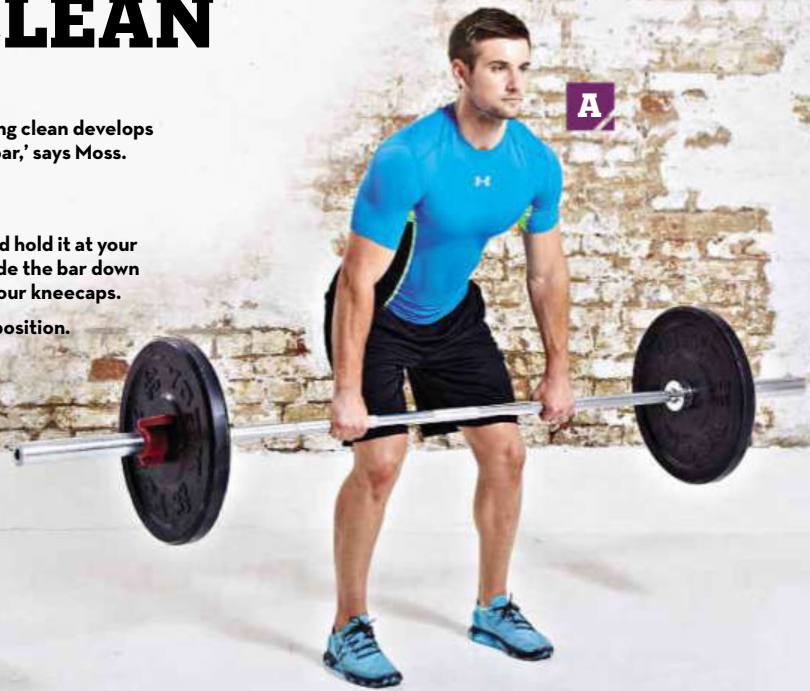
HANG CLEAN

WHY DO IT?

'Much like the hang snatch, the hang clean develops your speed for getting under the bar,' says Moss.

THE MOVE

- o Pick up the bar in a clean grip and hold it at your hips. Push your hips back and slide the bar down your thighs until it's just above your kneecaps.
- o Perform a clean from this hang position.



GYMNASTICS MOVES

Gymnasts have insane upper-body strength. Incorporating simple gymnastics-inspired moves into your training will give you impressive power and balance, and turn heads

THE COACH

David Jackson is a UK Strength & Conditioning Association accredited coach. With fellow S&C expert Tim Stevenson, he runs oneathlete.co.uk - a coaching outfit that combines their knowledge of S&C, calisthenics, physiotherapy and mental strength training.

Jackson's 13-year career as a professional rugby player was brought to an end by a head injury sustained during training. Looking for a new focus, he concentrated his efforts on the challenge of combining skill and strength to control his own bodyweight. Jackson now uses his passion to help mere mortals to mix gymnastics with their traditional strength training and bodyweight exercises. Follow his advice and you'll soon be on your way to developing total mastery of your body. You'll also have a lot of fun. Lifting weights isn't for everyone, but there can't be many people who don't fancy the idea of being able to walk on their hands.

Here you'll learn all the gymnastics basics, with tips from Jackson to help speed the process along. Some of the moves are hard, but that's the point. Bragging rights must be earned, after all.



RING DIP

WHY DO IT?

'The dip is like a squat for your upper body because it engages so many different muscles,' says Jackson. 'Doing it on rings gives the stabiliser muscles in your shoulders an extra workout, which can help with some of your lifts.'

THE MOVE

- o Adjust the rings so they're just above hip height and grip them with your knuckles facing away from your body.
- o Jump up and straighten your arms to support your weight, taking care to keep the rings close to your body.
- o Lower yourself to below parallel or as low as your shoulders will allow. Pause briefly before extending powerfully to go back up to the start.



PRO TIP

'Go as low as you can at first, but as your strength develops concentrate on increasing your range of motion,' says Jackson. 'It'll help massively if you want to move on to more advanced moves such as human flags.'

**B**

RING MUSCLE-UP

WHY DO IT?

'The muscle-up is the ultimate show-off bodyweight move for people in the know,' says Jackson. 'It's a combination of a pull-up and a dip, and you should be able to do a few strict reps of both before even attempting it.'

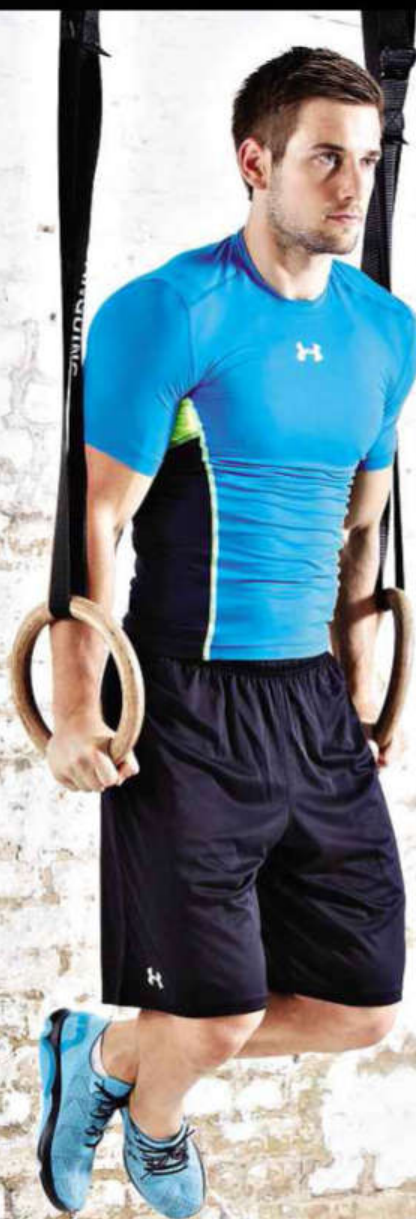
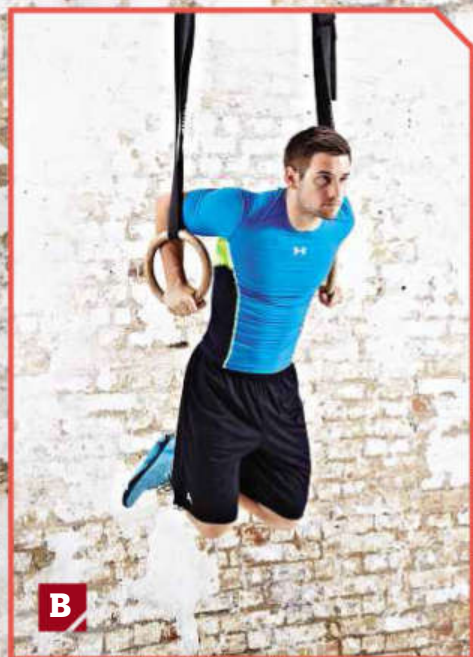
THE MOVE

- o Hang from a set of rings, palms facing in. The closer together the rings are, the easier you'll find the move.
- o Pull hard on the rings, keeping your elbows close to your sides. If you want to, you can add an explosive 'kip' at this stage, bringing your knees forwards and up to help with your momentum.
- o At the peak of the pull, throw your head forwards as if you're trying to headbutt someone. You should finish in the bottom of a very deep dip. Press it out to finish the move.



PRO TIP

For a strict muscle-up, you'll need to master the false grip. Hold the rings on the outside of your palms, with the center false grip position and fingers pointing toward you. From phase A to the initial pull until the rings are almost in your armpits, then flow smoothly into the transitions.



RING MUSCLE-UP PROGRESSION

PULL

WHY DO IT?

'Ring muscle-ups are fiendishly hard at first,' says Jackson. 'A strong pull is key. Do this progression exercise to help build the power needed to do a muscle-up in one fluid motion.'

THE MOVE

- o Dead hang from the rings. Explosively pull yourself up so the rings are in line with your shoulders, pulling back and down so your shoulder blades come towards each other.
- o Hold the position for a couple of seconds, then slowly lower yourself to the start.



PRO TIP

'Pull hard and visualise getting your chest to the rings and your hands to your armpits,' says Jackson. 'Think of a muscle-up as like putting on a T-shirt and it becomes less intimidating.'

BAR MUSCLE-UP

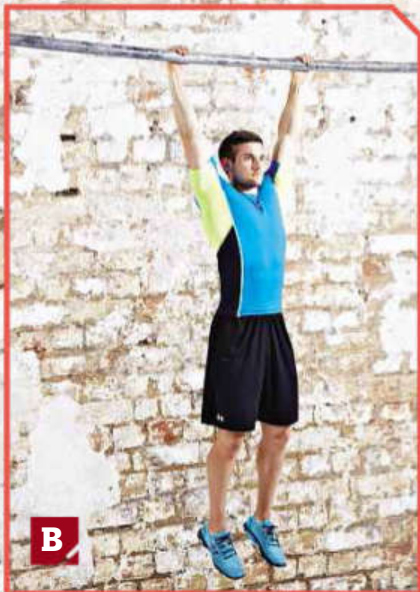
WHY DO IT?

'A straight bar muscle-up removes the instability rings provide but that doesn't make it easier,' says Jackson. 'In fact it's harder because you have to pull yourself up and around the bar to get above it.'

THE MOVE

- Jump up and grab the bar with an overhand grip around shoulder-width apart. Allow your body to swing forwards and backwards very gently.
- At the end of a forwards swing, just as you're beginning to swing back, pull yourself up as aggressively as possible. The slight swing combined with the pull will give you the correct angle for going around the bar.
- Pull your chest towards the bar. At the peak of the pull-up, lean forwards and try to catch yourself in the bottom of a dip. Push up until your arms are fully extended.
- Reverse the actions to return to the start.

A



B

PRO TIP

'Timing is crucial,' says Jackson. 'Practise with your feet in a resistance band tied to the bar to take some of the load. This will help you train the mechanics and timing of the movement.'

BAR MUSCLE-UP PROGRESSION

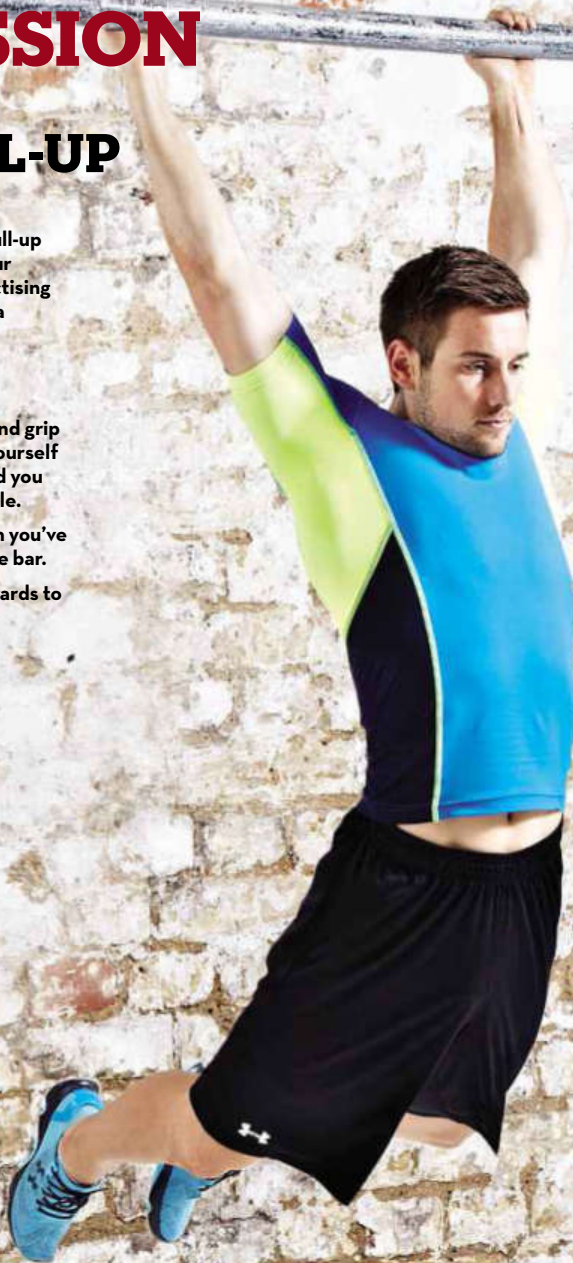
KIPPING PULL-UP

WHY DO IT?

'Kipping is when you swing during the pull-up to build momentum and make lifting your body that bit easier,' says Jackson. 'Practising this motion will make the back swing of a strict muscle-up feel more familiar.'

THE MOVE

- o Jump and grab the bar with an overhand grip around shoulder-width apart. Swing yourself forwards and kick your legs out behind you to build as much momentum as possible.
- o As you swing back, use the momentum you've created to pull yourself up towards the bar.
- o Drop down and push your weight forwards to initiate another swing.



**PRO TIP**

'Most of the hard work should be done by the momentum created by your bodyweight,' says Jackson. 'If you keep your arms locked out until the very last second of the swing, getting up will be no effort at all.'

HANDSTAND PRESS-UP

WHY DO IT?

'This is a great way to develop shoulder strength and stability,' says Jackson. 'And if you develop the balance to do it without a wall, you'll look also like a total legend.'

THE MOVE

- Place your hands about 30cm from a wall and kick your legs over your head and rest them against it. If you're struggling, lead with one leg and progressively kick harder until you feel the wall, then bring your other foot up to meet it.
- Brace your core and lower your head towards the floor. Take a progressive approach with this and only go as far as you feel you can control. As you get stronger, you'll be able to move your head closer to the ground.
- At the bottom of the press-up, tense your core again and push down hard, straightening your elbows until you've returned to the start.



PRO TIP

'Once you feel confident, try to rest as little weight as possible on the wall through your legs,' says Jackson. 'It's too easy to think you're doing a decent rep when really you're just cheating your way through it.'



HANDSTAND WALK

WHY DO IT?

'This is a good move for developing strength and stability in your shoulders while enhancing the coordination of your shoulder joints with the rest of your body,' says Jackson. 'It's also useful if your legs ever get too tired to walk!'

THE MOVE

- o Place both hands on the ground with your index fingers facing forwards. Spread your fingers to give you a wider base.
- o Kick up powerfully with one leg and allow the other to follow, aligning your wrists, elbows and shoulders. Practise on a soft, stable surface first so you can roll out of the handstand safely if necessary.
- o Let your knees bend a little to take more weight past your head and tip you in the direction you want to go. Walk with your hands using small, light 'steps'.

B

PRO TIP

'Dangling your legs forwards is the equivalent of an accelerator,' says Jackson. 'Have a friend on standby to catch and reset your legs if you get overeager.'

**A**

TOES TO BAR

WHY DO IT?

'Hanging exercises help to injury-proof your shoulders because gripping a bar engages the shoulder stabilisers,' says Jackson. 'Toes to bar can also help to build a solid six-pack as it places a lot of pressure on your lower abdominals.'

THE MOVE

- o Hang from a bar with an overhand grip. Lean back slightly and draw your shoulder blades together while lifting your legs towards the bar.
- o Straighten your legs to touch the bar with your toes. Lower back to a hanging position.

**A**

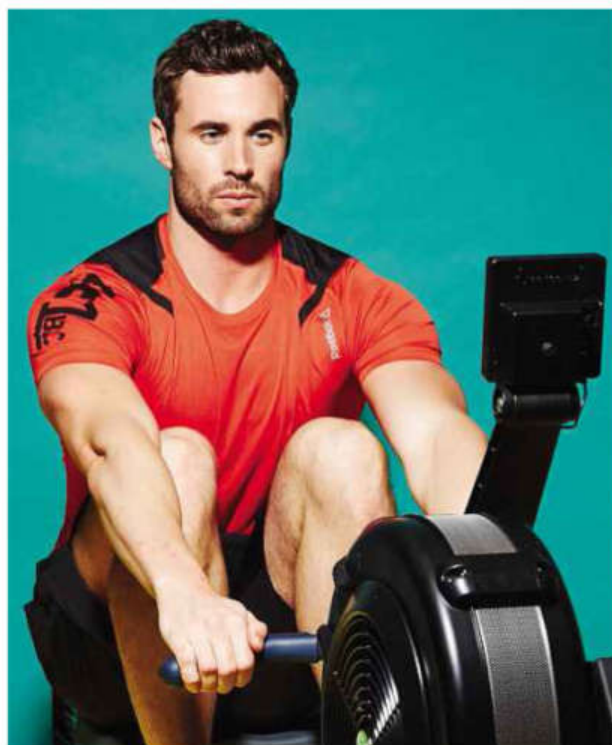
PRO TIP

'Always lower with control to maximise the strength development of the core,' says Jackson. 'To create adaptation we need tension, so being lazy and just letting your legs fall won't help you to get the most from this exercise.'



CARDIO

Having strong muscles and being able to perform a move perfectly will only get you so far if you're gasping for breath within minutes of starting your workout. That's why it's essential to incorporate cardio exercise into your programme to become the best all-round athlete you can be



CYCLING

Stationary bikes are useful but not particularly exciting. Hit the road and complete your first sportive to build leg strength and power endurance

Cycling is the king of cardio. Need proof? VO2 max is the ultimate measure of cardio power - it's your maximum uptake of oxygen consumption - and the highest ever recorded wasn't by a rower, a cross-country skier or that chap who used to blow up hot water bottles on *Record Breakers*, but rather by Norwegian cyclist Oskar Svendsen, at 97.5ml/kg/min.

Reaching those numbers isn't a freak genetic accident - it takes training. And what better goal than completing your first sportive cycling event? Go to cycloport.org and find an event, and follow our plan to build the strength and endurance required for the rigours of a long-distance challenge.

THE BENEFITS

Cycling not only works your heart and lungs to improve your aerobic fitness but also strengthens pretty much every muscle in your body. Functioning as the engine your legs obviously get a tough workout, but pulling on the handlebars works your arms too, while your core and back are vital for keeping you balanced as you ride. It's also kind on your joints thanks to its almost zero-impact nature. And don't forget, it's one of the best ways to get around: cheaper than public transport, faster than walking and healthier than driving.



YOUR SPORTIVE TRAINING PLAN

Put in the distance during training and you'll be able to complete your first long-distance cycling event with ease

EXPERT TIP **GEARING UP**

When cycling uphill select the gear that uses the smallest chainring (the gears at the front) and the largest sprocket (the gears at the rear). The reverse is true for downhill. If you're setting up your bike, it's recommended you choose 50-tooth and 34-tooth chainrings and a rear cassette with a large sprocket with 28 or 32 teeth.



THE FORM

Endurance and speed are as much about bike set-up and posture as overall cardio function



CRUISE CONTROL

Set your saddle height so your knee is bent at no more than 150° when at maximum extension (when the pedal is at the bottom). That height is roughly your inside leg minus 10cm, measured from the centre of the crank to the top of the saddle. Maintain a slight bend in your elbows and lean forwards from the hips, keeping your head up, backside out and spine straight, almost as if you're attempting a deadlift.

AERO TUCK

You'll get speed for free by maintaining an this position, which you'll see the likes of Mark Cavendish adopt as they sprint for the line. For maximum power with minimal drag, raise your backside off the saddle while hunkering down as low as possible. Place your hands on the drops of the handlebars (the curved, lower section) and bend your elbows 90°, keeping a flat back. Look ahead and pedal like hell.

THE PLAN

Mike Cotty is an endurance specialist and founder of the Col Collective (thecolcollective.com), who recently rode 1,012km across the Dolomites and Alps in 53hr 38min. Here's his six-week plan to get you through a 160km sportive. But remember, as Cotty says, 'For training it's all about time on the bike, not so much the distance covered.'

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6
MON	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST
TUE	45min ride	1hr ride	1½hr ride	1½hr ride	2½hr ride	4 hill repeats
WED	REST	REST	REST	5 hill repeats	REST	1hr ride
THU	1½hr ride	1½hr ride	2½hr ride	1½hr ride	7 hill repeats	REST
FRI	REST	REST	5 hill repeats	REST	1½hr ride	45min easy spin
SAT/SUN	2hr ride	3hr ride	4hr ride	5hr ride	6hr ride	Sportive

RUNNING

The 10K distance is a true test of stamina and sustained effort. Here's how to smash out an impressive time

If you've read Christopher McDougall's bestseller *Born To Run*, you'll know man was made to move. Yet so few of us actually do, through fear of the joint-busting nature of marathons or the tedium of plodding along on a treadmill. A 10K race, however, strikes the perfect balance. Training runs rarely last more than an hour, you'll challenge your aerobic system and muscular endurance to keep you going, and the distance is just short enough that you can put your foot down for a sprint finish. Race against the clock or check out runbritain.com to find a competitive 10K near you.

THE BENEFITS

There's a common misconception that any running you do will burn your hard-earned muscle, but while that can be true for endurance races such as marathons, the kind of training that delivers the best results for a 10K will support other aspects of your training rather than work against them.

Studies show that running can actually reduce your levels of the fat-storing stress hormone cortisol if your sessions last less than an hour. Add to that the fat-burning and fast-twitch muscle-building benefits of high-intensity interval runs and the mental determination needed, and it's clear an intelligent approach to running will benefit all other aspects of your functional fitness training.





YOUR 10K RUN TRAINING PLAN

Build a bedrock of cardio and muscular endurance with this ten-week plan that will complement all other aspects of your functional fitness training

EXPERT TIP

THE TALK TEST

Use these perceived effort guidelines with the table on the right to gauge how hard to push on your training runs.

LEVEL 6 Easy, can speak in complete sentences

LEVEL 7 Able to hold a conversation

LEVEL 8 Able to speak in short sentences

LEVEL 9 Able to say 4-5 words maximum

LEVEL 10 Able to say 2-3 words maximum



THE WARM-UP

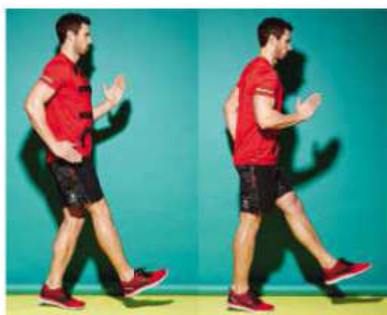
Do these dynamic stretches from running coach Nick Anderson (runningwithus.com) into your race prep so you're up to full speed from the off. For each move do three sets of 20m, jogging back to the start for your recovery



1 ANKLING

AIM To warm up the achilles and calves and boost eccentric strength.

FORM Keep your body upright as you take small steps, landing on the ball of your foot with your heel raised and then slowly lowering it to the ground.



2 REBOUND

AIM To increase foot speed and lower limb power.

FORM Step forwards with quick feet, landing lightly on your mid-foot and bouncing off the ground. Keep your body tall and legs straight.



3 HAMSTRING WALK-OUT

AIM To increase hamstring flexibility, strength and range.

FORM Plant your heel on the ground and point your toe up, keeping the leg straight. Slowly sink your hips low and sweep your arms past your ankles as you move forwards to stand. Swap legs.

THE PLAN

Want to put your new running skills to the test with a 10K? Follow this training plan to reach your target in just eight weeks

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
WEEK 1	REST	30min @level 8	REST	4x5min @level 9 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	REST	50min @level 7
WEEK 2	REST	5x5min @level 9 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	REST	REST	5x3min @level 10 with 60sec recovery jog	60min @level 7
WEEK 3	REST	35min @level 6	REST	3x8min @level 9 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	6x4min @level 10 with 90sec recovery jog	75min @level 7
WEEK 4	REST	6x5min @level 9 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	6x4min @level 10 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	REST	75min @level 7
WEEK 5	REST	6x5min @level 9 with 60sec recovery jog	REST	40min @level 6	REST	5km @level 10	80min @level 7
WEEK 6	REST	3x8min @level 9 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	6x5min @level 10 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	REST	80min @level 7
WEEK 7	REST	4x8min @level 9 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	6x4min @level 10 with 90sec recovery jog	REST	30min @level 8	45min @level 7
WEEK 8	REST	4x5min @level 9 with 60sec recovery jog	REST	REST	REST	20min @level 6	Race day

ROWING

Rowing shouldn't just be consigned to a warm-up activity. The 2K row is the gold standard of power endurance and a guaranteed V-shape builder

There's a reason Steve Redgrave used to renounce the coxless four after seemingly every Olympics (only to inevitably knuckle down and scoop another gold medal at the next one): rowing is hard. More specifically, the 2,000m - the distance of every Olympic event - emphasises endurance, power delivery and mental toughness. It's also one of the few forms of cardio that packs on serious muscle. A 7min 30sec 2K row is respectable, 7min is impressive. Turn the page for a training plan that will help you get there.

THE BENEFITS

Rowing burns a serious amount of calories: an intense workout on a rowing machine torches more than 300 in just 30 minutes. But it isn't just good for weight loss. Like cycling, rowing is a zero-impact endurance exercise that improves heart and lung function while working every major muscle in your body. The drive phase engages your leg muscles, then your core and finally your upper body. No wonder it's part of so many CrossFit Workouts of the Day (WODs) and a regular fixture at the CrossFit Games.



YOUR 2K ROW TRAINING PLAN

Learn the perfect technique and follow the plan that should see you achieve a sub-7min 2K row in just 11 days

LOUDER THAN TEN

What damper setting should you choose? It's simple: if you're a big guy, go for eight to nine and hit a lower stroke-per-minute rating. Smaller? Set it at six or seven and go faster.

THE FORM

Yanking at the handle like a lawnmower won't cut it. Here's how the pros pull



1 THE CATCH

Keep your arms straight, head up and upper body leaning forwards from the hips. 'Your shins shouldn't go past vertical,' says David Hart of rowing machine company Concept2. 'And don't overreach.'



2 THE DRIVE

Start the drive by pressing with your legs. As you move, lean back slightly, then finally add the arm pull. 'Your hands move in a straight line to and from the flywheel,' says Hart.



3 THE FINISH

'At the end of the stroke, your upper body should be leaning back to about 11 o'clock,' says Hart. 'Keep the handle held lightly below your ribs and don't "chicken wing" it - keep your elbows in.'



4 THE RECOVERY

'Extend your arms until they're straight, then lean forwards from your hips,' says Hart. 'Once your hands have cleared your knees, allow your knees to bend and slide the seat forward.'

THE PLAN

Devised by Gym Jones coach Pieter Vodden, this 2K-smashing strategy takes just 11 days. Repeat the whole thing until your time reaches 'respectable'

DAY 1

30sec row, 90sec recovery. Aim for 150m per 30sec and increase that by 1m per round. Take it as far as you can - 170 is the goal.

DAY 2 REST

DAY 3

10 x 500m row, 1min rest. Try to hold your intended 2K split time pace. If you're shooting for a 7min 2K, you need to hit 1min 45sec. On the last round, go all out.

DAY 4 & 5 REST

DAY 6

10min warm-up, 1,000m row as fast as possible.

DAY 7 REST

DAY 8

10min warm-up, 1,500m row as fast as possible.

DAY 9 & 10 REST

DAY 11

20min warm-up at slow place, with occasional 'power 10s' - ten hard strokes at your target 2K pace. 2,000m row as fast as possible.

SWIMMING

Get in the pool for a full-body cardio workout with almost zero impact on your joints

Even if you can't swim at all right now, it's never too late to learn. Lots of people take it up for the first time in later life and it's not uncommon to see people in their 80s in a lane next to an athletic 20-something. Functional fitness training can batter your body with the short, sharp bursts of expended energy of the many of the movements and the subsequent force going through your joints. Give it some respite by making pool sessions part of your regular workout schedule.

THE BENEFITS

Ever noticed how ripped the best swimmers are? Swimming requires you to use all the major muscle groups to propel yourself through the water, while a tight core helps to keep your body in line and good muscle is vital for an efficient stroke. While swimming it's easy to notice the effect poor technique has on your performance. This self-awareness will cross over to other aspects of your training such as bodyweight moves and lifts that require total mastery of your body, encouraging you to be more critical of form. Other benefits include reducing stress, improving posture and helping the mobility of the spine - all while building cardio. Not bad for an activity associated with being on holiday.



YOUR 750M TRAINING PLAN

Even swimming a few lengths is exhausting without much experience. Follow Olympic legend Mark Foster's plan to enable you to swim 30 lengths of a pool without stopping

THE TECHNIQUE

Become more efficient in the water to go further with these essential form tips from Steven Shaw, founder of the Shaw Method swimming technique



ROTATION

'Most people are too flat in the water,' says Shaw. 'Rotate your body, not your head, to open your chest to either side with each stroke. This makes you more streamlined and allows you to reach further and generate more power.'

KICKING

'The quads are oxygen-hungry muscles. For long swims they're not for propulsion but for balance and stability, so kick your legs between two and four times per stroke. Keep your ankles loose and only make small movements, kicking down and letting your leg float back up.'

BREATHING

'Focus on the out breath, not the in. Control your breath out and let the air in naturally as you turn your head so your mouth is out of the water. Breathe every three or five strokes for long swims. Breathing only on one side is like walking with a limp.'

HEAD ALIGNMENT

'Avoid craning your head up. For every centimetre you lift your head, your pelvis drops two centimetres. Instead, look straight down. Think of the back of your neck being long.'

RECOVERY STROKE

'Don't pull your leading arm back for each stroke until your other arm enters the water next to it in front of your head. This allows you to glide further with each stroke and engage your back muscles fully to maximise power.'

THE PLAN

Once you've got the technique down, build your fitness in the water with Foster's four-week plan. 'Use the sessions to work on your speed and endurance,' says Foster. 'Some will be quick, some longer, but aim to make each session lasts between 30 minutes and an hour by adding gentle warm-ups and warm-downs. The longer you're in the water, the better you'll get.'

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT/SUN
WEEK 1	16x25m with 10sec rest	REST	8x50m with 15sec rest	REST	REST	4x100m with 20sec rest
WEEK 2	8x50m with 15sec rest	REST	4x100m with 20sec rest	REST	REST	2x200m with 30sec rest
WEEK 3	16x50m with 20sec rest	REST	8x100m with 20sec rest	45min gentle backstroke active recovery	REST	4x200m with 30sec rest
WEEK 4	4x200m with 15sec rest	REST	2x400m with 20sec rest	45min gentle breaststroke active recovery	REST	1x750m

THE WORKOUTS



Now you know the moves, it's time to put them into action. The plans over the coming pages are aimed at a variety of different ability ranges. Start at the beginning or, if you're feeling confident, jump in at the deep end

THE COACHES

TOM HENRY

Tom Henry is a certified CrossFit trainer at CrossFit Perpetua (crossfitperpetualondon.com). As well as being a former Royal Marines commando, he has a long history of involvement in endurance sports, including cross-country, pentathlon and decathlon. You can read his thoughts about overcoming psychological fitness challenges at his blog, Taming Thumos (conditioned2live.com).

SALLY MOSS

Olympic lifts take a great deal of coordination and mobility to do safely. Moss has put together a specific workout to help with the individual movements involved in the moves. As well as improving your technique, it will also rapidly improve your strength.



Practice moves will get you used to key skills and body positions used in more advanced workouts.

CrossFit-style Workout of the Day – go hard and intense on these

The assistance moves will strengthen the muscles you need to get better at the main moves

AMRAP stands for as many rounds as possible in the time stated

WORKOUTS: BEGINNER

WEEK 1

BEGINNER LIFTING TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1	Squats/front squats
PRACTICE	5 front squats 10 sit-ups 15-calorie row
WOD 12min AMRAP	
DAY 2	1. Pull-ups/kiping pull-ups 2. Bench presses
PRACTICE	15 jumping pull-ups 10 bench presses
WOD 5 rounds for time	
DAY 3	REST DAY
DAY 4	Deadlifts
PRACTICE	5x5 deadlifts
WOD	5x Turkish get-up
ASSISTANCE MOVE	
DAY 5	Overhead presses/push presses/kettlebell swings
PRACTICE	12 push presses 21 kettlebell swings 400m run
WOD 15min AMRAP	
DAY 6	Play sport
ACTIVE REST	
DAY 7	REST DAY

130 Men's Fitness

BEGINNER WORKOUT

'We usually recommend newcomers ease themselves into a routine where they can show consistency in training three to four times a week for at least six to eight weeks,' says Henry. 'The focus is on understanding the fundamental movements and getting used to the intensity of the workouts. The weights, reps and times are quite low, which will ensure you remain safe while still getting a sweat on.'

INTERMEDIATE WORKOUT

'At an intermediate level we can start to introduce more complex barbell movements and gymnastics,' says Henry. 'CrossFit prides itself on being infinitely scalable and providing the athlete is working towards general physical preparedness, we can simply increase the difficulty of the beginner programme by increasing reps, loads and time within workouts as well as one extra training day per week.'

WORKOUTS: BEGINNER

WEEK
2

DAY 1
PRACTICE Swim strokes/underwater breath holds
WOD For time 8x50m swim (rest 60sec)

DAY 2
PRACTICE Squat/overhead squats
WOD 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 reps of each exercise for time
Overhead squats
Lunge

DAY 3 REST DAY

DAY 4
PRACTICE Ring supports/ring dips/cleans
WOD 21, 18, 15, 12, 9 reps for time
Cleans
Burpees

DAY 5
PRACTICE Squats/goblet squats
WOD 3x10 back squats
ASSISTANCE MOVE 3x10-12 Bulgarian split squats

DAY 6 Go for a hike
ACTIVE REST

DAY 7 REST DAY

Lean & Strong 131

You'll find form guides for the moves in the exercise section, with some minor moves explained in the glossary on p160

If you're instructed to do a WOD 'for time', do the prescribed reps as fast as you can (aim to improve if you do the WOD again). 'For load' means go as heavy as you can

Pick a weight that allows you to complete all the reps with good form. If it's too easy, increase the weight

ADVANCED WORKOUT

'Advanced athletes are those who can complete the majority of benchmark workouts in a respectable time,' says Henry. 'Expect higher reps, heavier loads and tougher times, as well as more complex moves such as heavy snatching and muscle-ups paired with metabolic conditioning workouts. At this stage, I'd encourage athletes to train five to six times a week.'

OLYMPIC LIFTING WORKOUT

'Each week focuses on a different aspect of the lift, starting with the finish and working backwards because it's easier that way - you add complexity as you go,' says Moss. 'Day one is snatch technique and strength, day two is clean and jerk technique and strength and core, and day three is full classical lifts and strength. It finishes with one-rep max attempts, so you've got something to boast about.'

WEEK
1

BEGINNER LIFTING

TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Squats/front squats

WOD 12min AMRAP

5 front squats
10 sit-ups
15-calorie row

DAY 2

PRACTICE

1. Pull-ups/kiping pull-ups
2. Bench presses

WOD 5 rounds for time

15 jumping pull-ups
10 bench presses

DAY 3

REST DAY

DAY 4

PRACTICE

Deadlifts

WOD

5x5 deadlifts

ASSISTANCE MOVE

5x Turkish get-up

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Overhead presses/push presses/kettlebell swings

WOD 15min AMRAP

12 push presses
21 kettlebell swings
400m run

DAY 6

ACTIVE REST

Play sport

DAY 7

REST DAY

WEEK 2

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Swim strokes/underwater breath holds

WOD For time

8x50m swim (rest 60sec)

DAY 2

PRACTICE

Squat/overhead squats

WOD 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 reps of each exercise for time

Overhead squats
Lunge

DAY 3

REST DAY

DAY 4

PRACTICE

Ring supports/ring dips/cleans

WOD 21, 18, 15, 12, 9 reps for time

Cleans
Burpees

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Squats/goblet squats

WOD

3x10 back squats

ASSISTANCE MOVE

3x10-12 Bulgarian split squats

DAY 6

ACTIVE REST

Go for a hike

DAY 7

REST DAY

WEEK
3

BEGINNER LIFTING

TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1

PRACTICE

WOD 3 rounds for time

Push jerks/kip swings

800m run
15 push jerks
10 lunges

DAY 2

PRACTICE

WOD 21, 15, 9 reps for time

Forward rolls/wall climbs/deadlifts

Deadlifts
Push presses

DAY 3

REST DAY

DAY 4

PRACTICE

All movements in workout for time

25 walking lunges
20 jumping pull-ups
50 box jumps (60cm box)
40 skips
25 bench dips
30 kettlebell swings
30 sit-ups
20 cleans
25 Bulgarian split squats
10 burpees
10 ring dips

DAY 5

PRACTICE

WOD

ASSISTANCE MOVES

Squats/Front squat

5x5 front squats

3x1 min squat hold

DAY 6

ACTIVE REST

Go for a bike ride

DAY 7

REST DAY

WEEK
4
DAY 1**PRACTICE**

Squats/overhead squats/snatch high pulls

WOD 12min AMRAP
 10 overhead squats
 50 skips
 10 snatch high pulls
 50 skips
DAY 2**PRACTICE**

Kipping pull-ups

WOD For time
 15 pull-ups
 50 press-ups
 50 sit-ups
 50 squats
DAY 3

REST DAY

DAY 4**PRACTICE**

10min gentle jog

WOD For time

Run 5km

DAY 5**WOD**

5x5 overhead presses

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3-4x1min plank

DAY 6**ACTIVE REST**

Play a team sport

DAY 7

REST DAY

WEEK 1

INTERMEDIATE LIFTING TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Squats/front squats

WOD 12min AMRAP

5 front squats
10 sit-ups
15-calorie row

DAY 2

PRACTICE

1. Pull-up/kiping pull-ups 2. Bench presses

WOD 5 rounds for time

15 pull-ups
10 bench press

DAY 3

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Play sport

DAY 4

PRACTICE

Deadlifts

WOD

3x5, 3x3 deadlifts

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3 x max effort squat holds

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Overhead presses/push presses/kettlebell swings

WOD 20min AMRAP

12 push presses
21 kettlebell swings
400m run

DAY 6

PRACTICE

Snatch warm-up

WOD 7 rounds for load:

50 skips
3x hang snatch
(rest 60sec)

DAY 7

REST DAY

WEEK 2

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Swim strokes/underwater breath holds

WOD For time

5x100m swim (rest 75sec)

DAY 2

PRACTICE

Squats/overhead squats

WOD 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 reps of each exercise for time

Overhead squats
Bulgarian split squats

DAY 3

PRACTICE

Push jerks/jerks

WOD

5x3 jerks

DAY 4

REST DAY

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Squats/goblet squats

WOD

1x20 back squats

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3x10-12 Bulgarian split squats

DAY 6

PRACTICE

Ring dips

WOD 21,15, 9 reps for time

Hang cleans
Burpees

DAY 7

ACTIVE REST DAY

Go for a hike

WEEK 3

INTERMEDIATE LIFTING

TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1

PRACTICE

WOD 3 rounds for time

Push jerks/kip swings

800m run
15 push jerks
10 toes to bar

DAY 2

PRACTICE

WOD 21, 15, 9 reps for time

Forward rolls/handstands

Deadlifts
Handstand press-ups

DAY 3

ACTIVE REST

Go for a bike ride

DAY 4

PRACTICE

All movements in workout for time

25 walking lunges
10 pull-ups
50 box jumps (60cm box)
20 double-unders
25 parallel bar dips
20 knees-to-elbows
30 kettlebell swings
30 sit-ups
20 hang cleans
25 hip extensions
10 burpees
2 rope climbs

DAY 5

PRACTICE

WOD

ASSISTANCE MOVES

Squats/front squats

3x5 3x3 front squats

3x15-20 hip extensions

DAY 6

PRACTICE

WOD 10min AMRAP

Cleans

5 hang cleans
10 box jumps (1m box)

DAY 7

REST DAY

WEEK 4

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Squats/overhead squats/snatch high pulls

WOD 15 min AMRAP

10 overhead squats
30 double-unders
10 snatch high pulls
30 double-unders

DAY 2

PRACTICE

Kipping pull-ups

WOD for time

50 pull-ups
75 press-ups
75 sit-ups
75 squats

DAY 3

PRACTICE

Snatches

WOD 6 rounds for time

5 hang snatches
30sec goblet squat hold

DAY 4

REST DAY

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Dynamic running warm-up

WOD For time

Run 5km

DAY 6

WOD

3x5 3x3 overhead presses press

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3-4 x 1min ring support holds

DAY 7

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Play a team sport

WEEK 1

ADVANCED LIFTING

TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Squat/front squats

WOD 12min AMRAP

5 front squats
10 sit-ups
15-calorie row

DAY 2

PRACTICE

1. Pull-up/kiping pull-ups 2. Bench presses

WOD 5 rounds for time

15 chest to bar pull-ups
10 bodyweight bench presses

DAY 3

PRACTICE

Deadlifts

WOD

5x3 deadlifts

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3x max effort L-sit hold on rings

DAY 4

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Play sport

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Overhead presses/push presses/kettlebell swings

WOD 20min AMRAP

12 push presses
21 kettlebell swings
400m run

DAY 6

PRACTICE

Snatches

WOD 7 rounds for load:

50 double-unders
1 snatch
(rest 2min)

DAY 7

PRACTICE

Swim strokes/underwater breath holds

WOD For time

1x100m swim (rest 2min)

WEEK 2

DAY 1

REST DAY

DAY 2

PRACTICE

Squats/Overhead squats

WOD 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 reps of each exercise for time

Overhead squats
Bulgarian split squats

DAY 3

PRACTICE

Push jerks/jerks

WOD

7x jerks

DAY 4

PRACTICE

Squats/goblet squats

WOD

20x back squats

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3x10-12 Bulgarian split squats

DAY 5

ACTIVE REST DAY

Go for a hike

DAY 6

PRACTICE

Ring support/ring dips/prep regression/hang clean

WOD 21, 15, 9 reps for time

Cleans
Burpees over bar

DAY 7

PRACTICE

Push jerks/kip swings

WOD 3 rounds for time

15 push jerks
15 toes to bar
800m run

WEEK
3

ADVANCED LIFTING

TRAINING PLAN

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Forward rolls/Handstands/Kipping handstand press-ups/
deadlifts (build up weight)

WOD 'Diane' - 21, 15, 9 reps for time

Deadlifts
Handstand press-ups

DAY 2

REST DAY

DAY 3

PRACTICE

All movements in workout for time

25 walking lunges
20 pull-ups
50 box jumps (60cm box)
20 double-unders
25 ring dips
20 Bulgarian split squats
30 kettlebell swings
30 sit-ups
20 hang cleans
10 Turkish get-ups
10 burpees
3 rope climbs

DAY 4

PRACTICE

Squats/front squats

WOD

5x3 front squats

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3x15-20 Turkish get-ups

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Cleans

WOD 10min AMRAP

5 power cleans

DAY 6

ACTIVE REST

Go for a bike ride

DAY 7

PRACTICE

Squats/overhead squats/snatch high pulls

WOD 18min AMRAP

10 overhead squats
50 double-unders
10 snatch high pulls
50 double-unders

WEEK 4

DAY 1

PRACTICE

Kipping pull up

WOD 'Angie' for time

100 pull-ups
100 press-ups
100 sit-ups
100 squats

DAY 2

PRACTICE

Snatches

WOD 'Amanda' - 9, 7, 5 reps for time

Snatches
Ring muscle-ups

DAY 3

REST DAY

DAY 4

WOD

5x3 overhead presses

ASSISTANCE MOVES

3-4x1min handstand hold

DAY 5

PRACTICE

Front squats/push presses/thrusters/kiping pull-ups

WOD 'Helen' - 3 rounds for time

12 pull-ups
21 kettlebell swings
400m run

DAY 6

PRACTICE

Dynamic running warm-up

WOD For time

Run 10km

DAY 7

ACTIVE RECOVERY

Play a team sport



OLYMPIC LIFTING

TRAINING PLAN



RECEIVING POSITION

DAY 1

POWER SNATCH + OVERHEAD SQUAT

5 sets x 2 reps,
working up in weight

SNATCH FROM HIP

6 sets x 2 reps,
working up in weight

ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

4 sets x 6 reps, working up to as much weight as
you can do with good form

STRICT OVERHEAD PRESS

4 sets x 6 reps, working up to as much weight as
you can do with good form

DAY 2

HANG CLEAN FROM JUST ABOVE KNEE

6 sets x 2 reps,
working up in weight

JERK

5 sets x 2 reps,
working up in weight

FRONT SQUAT

5 sets x 5 reps, working up in weight

LUNGE

3 sets x 10 reps,

PULL-UP

3 sets x 6 reps

DAY 3

SNATCH BALANCE

4 sets x 4 reps (for power recruitment)

SNATCH

6 sets x 3 reps, working up in weight

CLEAN & JERK

7 sets x 2 reps, working up in weight

ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

4 sets x 8 reps, as much weight as you can do
with good form

PRESS-UP

4 sets x 10 reps



THE TRANSITION

DAY 1

SNATCH BALANCE

5 sets x 3 reps,
working up in weight

SNATCH FROM JUST ABOVE KNEE

6 sets x 3 reps,
working up in weight

ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

5 sets x 5 reps
(increase weight from last week)

STRICT OVERHEAD PRESS

5 sets x 5 reps
(increase weight from last week)

DAY 2

HANG CLEAN FROM JUST ABOVE KNEE

6 sets x 2 reps

JERK

5 sets x 3 reps

FRONT SQUAT

5 sets x 3 reps,
work up in weight

LUNGE

3 sets x 10 reps

PULL-UP

3 sets x 6 reps

DAY 3

SNATCH BALANCE

5 sets x 2 reps, moderate weight
(challenging but not your 2 rep max)

SNATCH

8 sets x 2 reps,
work up in weight

CLEAN & JERK

8 sets x 2 reps, work up in weight

ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

4 sets x 6 reps
(increase weight from last week)

CLOSE GRIP PUSH UPS

4 sets x 12 reps



THE PULL

DAY 1

SNATCH HIGH PULL

3 sets x 5 reps, light weight
(warming up the positions)

SNATCH PULL + SNATCH

6 sets x 2 reps, work up in weight
(use straps if you want to)

SNATCH PULL TO HANG POSITION

3 sets x 5 reps, add 10kg to the
weight used in the previous exercise

SNATCH GRIP ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

5 sets x 3 reps, increase weight from last week

PUSH PRESS

4 sets x 5 reps

DAY 2

POWER CLEAN + JERK

3 sets x 5 reps, moderate weight
(warm up & recruit muscle)

SNATCH HIGH PULL + CLEAN

6 sets x 2 reps, working up in weight

BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

5 sets x 5 reps each leg, challenging
but doable with good form

TURKISH GET-UP

4 sets x 8 reps

OFFSET CARRY

3 x 10m walk

DAY 3

BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

3 sets x 6 reps (alternating legs)

SNATCH

10 sets x 1 rep, Every Minute On the Minute
for 10 minutes, at a weight that is challenging
but doable (warm up to target weight first)

CLEAN & JERK

10 sets x 1 rep, Every Minute On the Minute
for 10 minutes, at a weight that is challenging
but doable (warm up to target weight first)

FRONT SQUAT

6 sets x 3 reps (heavy)



MEET THE ATHLETES

Discover the training secrets of two of the world's fittest men - and see how far functional fitness training can take you



RICH FRONING

P148

Whatever your criteria for the fittest man alive, you'll find it hard to not have Froning near the very top of your list. He's the only man to win the CrossFit Games four times, taking gold in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. He rarely takes a day off from working out - turn the page to find out more about his highly impressive training intensity.



JOSH BRIDGES

P154

The roots of functional fitness can be found in rehabilitating people with injuries or movement problems, which came in useful when Bridges found his CrossFit career threatened by a horrific knee injury sustained while serving as a US Navy SEAL. Two years later, he finished fourth in the CrossFit Games.





RICH FRONING

Froning has won the CrossFit Games, the world's toughest test of fitness, four times - more than anyone else. Here's how he got to the top





RICH FRONING



Age 28

Height 1.75m

Weight 91kg

Achievements

■ CrossFit Games
champion 2011,
2012, 2013, 2014



Within the past two years we've seen Dwayne Johnson and Kellan Lutz play Hercules onscreen - but for our money, the only modern mortal fit to portray the legendary hero is Rich Froning. In July 2014 the former firefighter won the CrossFit Games title for the fourth year running, confirming his status as the fittest man on Earth.

It's a feat he's had to work hard at to accomplish. At his first attempt, in 2010, he came unstuck on the rope climb during the final event and missed out on first place. Since then he has learned to prepare for any scenario, iron out every technical flaw and turn his few

weaknesses into strengths. His secrets? Smart programming and heavy lifting.

BODY MOVING

It's 8am at London's CrossFit Thames gym when Froning gets to work. He has barely got his feet on the ground after a long-haul flight from his home in Tennessee, but already he's going all-out on the rowing machine. Two minutes later he marches over to the rack for some front squats: eight reps each of 70kg, 90kg, 110kg and 130kg.

Now warm, he begins hefting a heavily laden bar overhead. Overhead squats, snatch pulls, snatches and some power cleans for good measure. Then four sets of three back squats. To finish, Froning powers through a more traditional

CrossFit workout, rotating four sets of max-rep pull-ups, glute-ham raises, GHD sit-ups and back extensions.

Frighteningly, this is how Froning trains in the off-season. 'I train all year round, usually three or four sessions a day,' he says, barely out of breath after finishing the final rep of his two-hour workout. 'The more I train, the better I feel. Whereas on days when I can't get as much done, I feel worse. I'm not fun to be around if I can't get a barbell in my hands or get out and run.'

What counts as CrossFit - officially described as 'constantly varied, functional movements performed at relatively high intensity' - is hard to pin down. Froning's personal favourite workout, called Amanda (see the

box 'Meet Amanda' on p159), pairs gymnastics movements with heavy Olympic lifts in supersets. Others, such as the gruelling Burden Run that took place on day two of the 2013 Games, combine long sprints with tyre flips, log carries and sled drags. A 25m handstand walk was a feature of the 2013 competition. The principle is that a CrossFit athlete must be ready for anything and everything, but Froning is quick to correct anyone who suggests that makes it too erratic.

'CrossFit is varied, not random,' he says. 'It's important to assess your training, to note down what you've lifted and your times to complete a workout. CrossFit is about finding a balance. You've got to figure out what you haven't done and what needs working on. In training you've got to be well-rounded in every discipline.'

FLUENT LANGUAGE

Every day Froning spends an hour on dedicated strength work. The programme he favours is 5/3/1, created by American strength coach Jim Wendler, which focuses on squats, deadlifts, bench presses and overhead presses with a final set of max reps that complements the CrossFit ethos of pushing yourself as hard as you can.

'All strength programmes and workouts have their strengths and weaknesses,' Froning says. 'I do a lot of mine on the fly because I never know how a workout is going to affect me the next day, so I need to be adaptable. Now I use my body as a test to see what works and what doesn't. It's important to listen to your body.'

But his approach to Olympic lifting is more structured. The first half of his mammoth morning session is based on

workouts posted on the Olympic lifting site catalystathletics.com/workouts (see the box 'Lift like Froning' on p158). 'This one is part of a 13-week cycle. It will be the longest I've ever done and it's great because you work up to heavy singles of whatever you can manage, rather than percentages.'

On-the-minute training is another practice Froning trusts. With this, you choose a number of reps of an exercise to perform each minute. The faster you complete them, the more rest you have. 'It's one of the best things

I've ever done for getting good at the Olympic lifts. I get the guys in our box [CrossFit Mayhem, Froning's gym in Cookeville, Tennessee] to do three reps on the minute. The weight is up to them. They can work on technique or on their strength, or do it for speed so they have to go a bit lighter.'

ROCKET MAN

This combination of strength and power work has helped Froning's lifts rocket in the five years since he first competed at the Games. His PB snatch has increased



RICH FRONING

from 90kg to 136kg, while his clean and jerk jumped from 115kg to 168kg. 'When I first began CrossFit I lost probably 20lb [9kg]. I progressively got back to 200lb [90kg] but it's useable weight. I can lift more than I could when I started so, in my opinion, it's better weight.'

Despite what his numbers might suggest, Froning isn't the strongest athlete at the Games. He's not the fastest either. But he'll always finish near the top of the pile. A bottomless well of energy and instantaneous recovery mean he often powers through workouts while others fade away. 'People ask me if there's a secret formula but honestly it just takes hard work,' he says. 'It's not genetics. If you

look at my dad he's about 140lb [64kg], if that, and that's mostly in his beard.'

FAMILY TIES

It's another of Froning's father figures who deserves credit for developing this mental toughness. At Cookeville High School Froning played baseball under coach Butch Chaffin, where he began as a 55kg freshman infielder but grew into a 73kg senior captain and team MVP. 'I owe him a lot. He was like a second dad,' says Froning. 'He would see how far he could push you mentally. If you could stand up to what he was putting you through, a baseball game's nothing.'

Chaffin, who once described Froning as having the best work ethic in the

history of the school, would get them to do relentless circuits, rotating 30 seconds of flat-out work nonstop for an hour at a time. 'We worked real hard,' says Froning. 'We'd split into teams of four and each run a mile, with the team's average time being your score. We ran a lot. We used to joke that we ran more than the track team.'

With Chaffin, everything was a competition. 'But that's what makes you push yourself harder,' Froning says, who usually trains with a group of fellow athletes at his gym. 'Their strengths may be my weaknesses or the other way around, but we hold each other accountable and make each other do the things we don't want

LIFT LIKE FRONING

Rich Froning uses Catalyst Athletics routines to train for Olympic lifting. Here's CA's programme for beginners

	 WEEK 1 In this week use a weight that's challenging, but requires comfortably less than max effort. Rest as necessary.	 WEEK 2 Use same or similar weights as week 1 with this increased volume.	 WEEK 3 Increase the weights from last week as you're able to.	 WEEK 4 Increase the weights from last week as you're able to.
MONDAY	CLEAN AND JERK Sets 5 Reps 2 CLEAN PULL Sets 3 Reps 3 BACK SQUAT Sets 3 Reps 5	CLEAN AND JERK Sets 5 Reps 3 CLEAN PULL Sets 4 Reps 3 BACK SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 5	CLEAN AND JERK Sets 5 Reps 1 CLEAN PULL Sets 3 Reps 3 BACK SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 3	CLEAN AND JERK Sets 5 Reps 1 CLEAN PULL Sets 3 Reps 2 BACK SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 2
TUE	REST	REST	POWER SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 3 HANG CLEAN Sets 5 Reps 2	POWER SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 2 POWER CLEAN Sets 5 Reps 2
WEDNESDAY	SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 2 SNATCH PULL Sets 3 Reps 3 FRONT SQUAT Sets 3 Reps 3	SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 3 SNATCH PULL Sets 4 Reps 3 FRONT SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 3	SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 1 SNATCH PULL Sets 3 Reps 3 FRONT SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 2	SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 1 SNATCH PULL Sets 3 Reps 2 FRONT SQUAT Sets 3 Reps 2
THURSDAY	POWER SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 2 POWER CLEAN AND POWER JERK Sets 5 Reps 2 OVERHEAD SQUAT Sets 3 Reps 3	POWER SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 3 POWER CLEAN AND POWER JERK Sets 5 Reps 3 OVERHEAD SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 3	HANG SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 3 POWER CLEAN AND POWER JERK Sets 5 Reps 1 OVERHEAD SQUAT Sets 5 Reps 1	HANG SNATCH Sets 5 Reps 2 POWER CLEAN AND POWER JERK Sets 4 Reps 1 OVERHEAD SQUAT Sets 3 Reps 1
FRI	REST	REST	REST	REST
SATURDAY	SNATCH Heavy single CLEAN AND JERK Heavy single FRONT SQUAT Heavy single	SNATCH Sets 6 Reps 1 CLEAN AND JERK Sets 6 Reps 1 FRONT SQUAT Sets 3 Reps 1	SNATCH Heavy single CLEAN AND JERK Heavy single FRONT SQUAT Heavy single	SNATCH Heavy single CLEAN AND JERK Heavy single FRONT SQUAT Heavy single

to do.' Currently that's long-distance running for Froning, which has led him to train with CrossFit coach Brian MacKenzie of crossfitendurance.com. 'It's good having a group of people who'll call you out on stuff. One of the best ways of learning you need to work on something is by getting beat at it.'

TRAIN IN PAIN

It comes as a surprise when you look at Froning in action to learn he's in pain almost every day, riddled with DOMS from his nonstop work ethic. Overtraining isn't something he believes in. Instead he depends on a gargantuan appetite for peanut butter and whole milk to repair his aching muscles. 'At one point I went through seven gallons [26.5 litres] of whole milk in a week - that's a PB.'

In the morning he'll train in a fasted state before breakfast, with just a



shake and snack of deli meat or cheese, followed by another CrossFit-style workout. 'At night, if I'm hungry, I'll pretty much eat whatever I want. I don't tend to keep a log of what I eat.'

Sleep is essential too, and if injuries flare up he has stretches he learned from Kelly Starrett of mobilitywod.com that help him. But ultimately, Froning is aware the colossal amount of training he gets through isn't for everyone. 'Everything in my life, from growing up on a farm with hundreds of acres to roam in, to being a firefighter where you have to be ready for any emergency, has brought me to this point.'

'What I do, in training for the Games, is just a case of beating myself into the ground so I'm ready for whatever it can throw at me. But CrossFit itself will help anyone get fitter and stronger without them having to push so hard. What I tell people is have fun and know your limits. It can be competitive, yes, but the whole point of doing CrossFit is to be healthier. If you're stressing about it and over-complicating it you won't enjoy it.'

MEET AMANDA

Nail Froning's favourite workout

This workout, which debuted in the 2010 CrossFit Games, combines some of the toughest moves from Olympic lifting and gymnastics. If you can't do the full thing, try the scaled-down version.

AMANDA



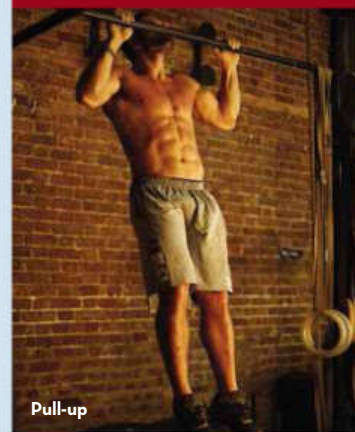
Squat snatch

Three rounds of muscle-ups and 135lb (61.25kg) squat snatches for time

REPS 9, 7, 5

The squat snatch is a tough move in its own right, and to do muscle-ups you'll need to perfect the ring pull-up and ring dip.

MINI-AMANDA



Pull-up

Three rounds of pull-ups and 40kg overhead squats for time

REPS 9, 7, 5

CrossFitters will kick - or 'kip' - during pull-ups, but avoid it if you can. The overhead squats will also be a brutal test of core strength.

'I'M NOT MUCH FUN TO BE AROUND IF I CAN'T GET A BARBELL IN MY HANDS OR GET OUT AND RUN'

scoop of BSN's Amino X - giving him 10g of anti-catabolic amino acids - and vitamin C. 'That way I don't feel heavy or full.' Then he'll have a protein shake with milk followed by eggs and bacon. Next up is a strength session similar to the workout, left, followed by another



JOSH BRIDGES

From Navy SEAL to elite athlete, Josh Bridges is used to putting himself through brutal workouts in order to become the best





JOSH BRIDGES



Age 32

Height 1.65m

Weight 77kg

Achievements

- Fourth place,
2014 CrossFit Games
- Seventh place,
2013 CrossFit Games
- Second place,
2011 CrossFit Games

JOSH BRIDGES



Twenty-six. That's the pitiful number of days 32-year-old elite CrossFit athlete and former US Navy SEAL

Josh Bridges has off from training in a year. That means he trains 330 days over a 12-month period. And he does between two and three sessions a day, meaning he trains more than 700 times from the start of January to the end of December. Most of us won't do that many workouts in five years.

'I play training by ear,' he tells us at a Nike training event to launch the new CrossFit-friendly shoe, the Metcon 1 - he's the first ambassador Nike has brought on board as it makes its first steps into a sport that

has been dominated by Reebok. 'If I'm feeling good, I push. If not, I back off. I've been training CrossFit since 2005 so I know I can handle resting only one day every two weeks.'

FIT FOR PURPOSE

If you know nothing of CrossFit, you'd be forgiven for thinking he has a problem. Even if you are familiar with CrossFit - a multi-discipline sport comprising constantly varied high-intensity functional movements from the worlds of Olympic lifting, powerlifting, endurance sports and gymnastics - you might think he has serious overkill issues.

But if you consider the make-up of the competition that crowns the yearly

CrossFit champion (and World's Fittest Man), the CrossFit Games, it makes more sense. Take the 2014 event, for example: on two of its four days, competitors had to complete four workouts so brutal that just one would leave most people on their knees.

Arguably the hardest day of last year's event started with Triple 3 - a 3,000m row, 300 skipping double-unders and a three-mile (4.8km) run for time. It was followed by two 100-yard (91.4m) sled push workouts for time and finished the 21-15-9 complex, in which athletes had to complete a 90-rep workout of 70kg deadlifts, 70kg cleans, 70kg snatches, pull-ups, chest-to-bars and muscle-ups for time. And that's just one day.



'MY KNEE DISLOCATED AND EVERY LIGAMENT WAS SHREDDED'

The diversity of the Games events means Bridges needs to train in everything from the Olympic lifts - the clean and jerk and the snatch - to running, rowing, rope climbing and gymnastic movements such as handstand press-ups and muscle-ups. 'You have to be careful you

don't overtrain one thing at the expense of another,' says Bridges. 'I'm not the strongest guy out there, but I'm solid with my gymnastics and calisthenics-style movements, and I have good endurance.

So is his training mainly strength-focused? 'No,' says Bridges. 'Recently I've been working up to a lot of heavy single reps with my front and back squats and Olympic lifts to build strength, but if I just work on my weaknesses and neglect my strengths, I'll become mediocre at everything. To excel at CrossFit you need to be really good at everything.'

'At the moment the qualifying for the CrossFit Games [the Open, a series of workouts that competitors

either film and submit to the CrossFit website or take on at affiliated gyms] is taking place so my training has been geared to that,' says Bridges. 'The exercises in the Open workouts are fairly basic but you need a good work capacity to do well. When you get to the regional events, the last qualifying round before the Games, the weights get heavier and the moves harder, so my workouts change accordingly.'

OUT OF JOINT

The ability to survive such a regime is down to two things: borderline X-Men-style genetics and an unholy ability to recover quickly. Bridges, who placed second in the 2011 CrossFit Games (his first), has both. That's not to say his

CrossFit career has been all smooth – in 2012 he horrifically injured his knee while serving as a Navy SEAL. ‘It was a freak accident,’ he says. ‘My knee dislocated and pretty much every ligament was shredded. I remember looking down and seeing my leg bent 45° the wrong way. It was gross.’

But for a man capable of pushing himself hard, it was just another obstacle he had to overcome. ‘Three days after I did it I was in the hospital gym,’ he says. ‘I was heavily medicated and my heart was racing because my blood was a little thin. I remember thinking that I shouldn’t go too hard but I had to stay active to get on the road to recovery.’

The 2012 Games were a write-off, but he finished seventh in 2013 and showed he was truly back in the game with fourth place last year. ‘The knee is good now,’ he says. ‘But I have to spend a long time warming it up if I’m doing deep squats. I’ve also had to undo a lot of crappy habits and strength deficiencies I’d built up while recovering.’

Even though he’s fit again, recovery remains at the front of his mind. ‘To cope with my workload, I get

massages, have acupuncture, take salt baths and use compression,’ he says. But of everything he does, he prizes sleep the highest. ‘I try to get nine or ten hours a night. It’s amazing how much recovering you do while you’re unconscious.’

SLACKING OFF

‘In my 20s I used to walk into hard workouts with no warm-up but now I need to work my way in to avoid pulling muscles,’ Bridges says. ‘I spend ten

CROSS THEM OFF

Bridges’s stretches will get you ready for the rigours of CrossFit

BRIDGES SAYS ‘These stretches will loosen up your whole body and ensure you have full range of motion through key joints and muscle groups. Ideally spend ten minutes doing mobility and dynamic stretches before your first working set.’

1 QUAD STRETCH

SETS 1 TIME 90SEC EACH SIDE

Kneel with your back foot against a wall and your front foot on the floor. Squeeze your glutes so you feel a stretch in your hip flexors and quads.

Bridges says ‘This opens up your hips for any move that includes squats.’



3 HAMSTRING STRETCH

SETS 1 REPS 20 EACH LEG

With a resistance band around your waist, step one foot forward and bend at the hips. Slightly bend then straighten your front leg.

Bridges says ‘Essential for anything, from Olympic lifts to running.’



2 LAT STRETCH

SETS 1 TIME 90SEC EACH SIDE

Wrap a resistance band around your wrist and attach it to a bar above you. Holding your wrist with your other hand, lean into the stretch to rotate your shoulder and stretch the lats below your armpit.

Bridges says ‘Using the stretch of the band helps open up your shoulder girdle.’



4 CHEST STRETCH

SETS 1 TIME 90SEC EACH SIDE

Wrap a resistance band around your wrist and attach it to a bar diagonally above and behind you. Step away from the bar to stretch your pecs. Increase the stretch on each breath.

Bridges says ‘Opening up your pecs is key for overhead work.’





MY GIRL

Some of the most famous CrossFit workouts are named after girls. Do this one to get a taste of what CrossFit is all about

'All the "girls" are fun,' says Bridges. 'Beginners should start with one that's dirty enough to give them a feel for how demanding CrossFit is, but without too many technical movements so they can give it a go without having to train the exercises first. This one's named Fran.'

With a 40kg barbell, perform 21 reps of thrusters, followed by 21 pull-ups. Then do 15 reps of each exercise, then nine reps of each.

THRUSTER

Hold the barbell on the backs of your shoulders with your hands just wider than shoulder-width apart. Sink into a deep squat, stand and press the bar overhead.

PULL-UP

To put in the best time possible, you need to learn butterfly pull-ups, where you use a motion similar to the swimming stroke to power the move. If you'd rather do each rep strict, it's a dead hang at the bottom, chin over the bar at the top.



TIME TO AIM FOR
Sub-7min

(Bridges's best time is 2min 2sec)

to 20 minutes on warm-up stretches [see the box, left], lower-weight versions of the moves I'll be doing in a workout and flossing - where you wrap a short, thick resistance band around joints and limbs to break up scar tissue that builds up during a previous workout so your muscles can move more freely and efficiently.'

For a man so meticulous about training and recovery, you'd expect him to be the same about food but the way he trains means he can indulge some of his nutritional vices. 'I will never give up burritos or pizza,' he says. 'I work out so much I can't eat enough broccoli, spinach and chicken to feel full so I need a huge supply

of carbs. I love bread - provided you get the right balance of macros it's a myth that you have to give it up.'

With training going well, Bridges hopes one day soon to finish at the top of the podium. 'I've adopted a slightly different mentality to training,' he says. 'Rather than getting hung up on what times other people are putting in or weights they're lifting, I've stayed out of their business and focused on beating myself. Hitting a PB feels like a genuine achievement and spurs me on. It's made my training a lot more fun. I feel truly ready for the next Games.'

Would you bet against a man who's prepared to train 700+ hours a year to achieve his goal? We wouldn't.

GLOSSARY

Come across any terms or exercises you're not familiar with? Here's everything you need to know to complete the workouts

AMRAP

As many reps, or rounds, as possible. Such workouts give you a set time to complete as many rounds of a circuit as you can, resting only when necessary.

CALORIE ROW

Use a rowing machine until you've burned the given number of calories.

CLUSTERS

A circuit-based training protocol in which you add brief pauses between sets, allowing you to lift for longer before failure.

COMPLEXES

Workout using a single piece of kit to perform all the exercises back to back without putting it down.

EMOM

Every minute on the minute. Perform your reps at the start of every minute, rest for the remaining seconds, then repeat.

HIIT

High-intensity interval training. Any workout that requires you to alternate between periods of high-intensity work and rest.

HIP EXTENSIONS

Lie on your back and raise your hips, keeping your feet flat on the floor.

KETTLEBELL

Spherical weight with a handle, usually made of cast-iron or steel.

KIP SWING

The swing part of a kipping pull-up, practised as a separate drill.

KNEES TO ELBOWS

Lying on your back, bring your knee up to touch the opposite elbow.

L-SIT

Hanging from rings or a pull-up bar, raise your legs in front of you and hold for the prescribed time.

PLANK

From a press-up position, support your weight on your toes and forearms and hold, keeping your body straight.

REP

Short for repetition. One rep is the completion of an exercise from start to finish.

RING SUPPORT

Hold the top position of a ring dip.

SET

A given number of reps performed consecutively without rest.

SQUAT HOLD

Hold the bottom position of a squat.

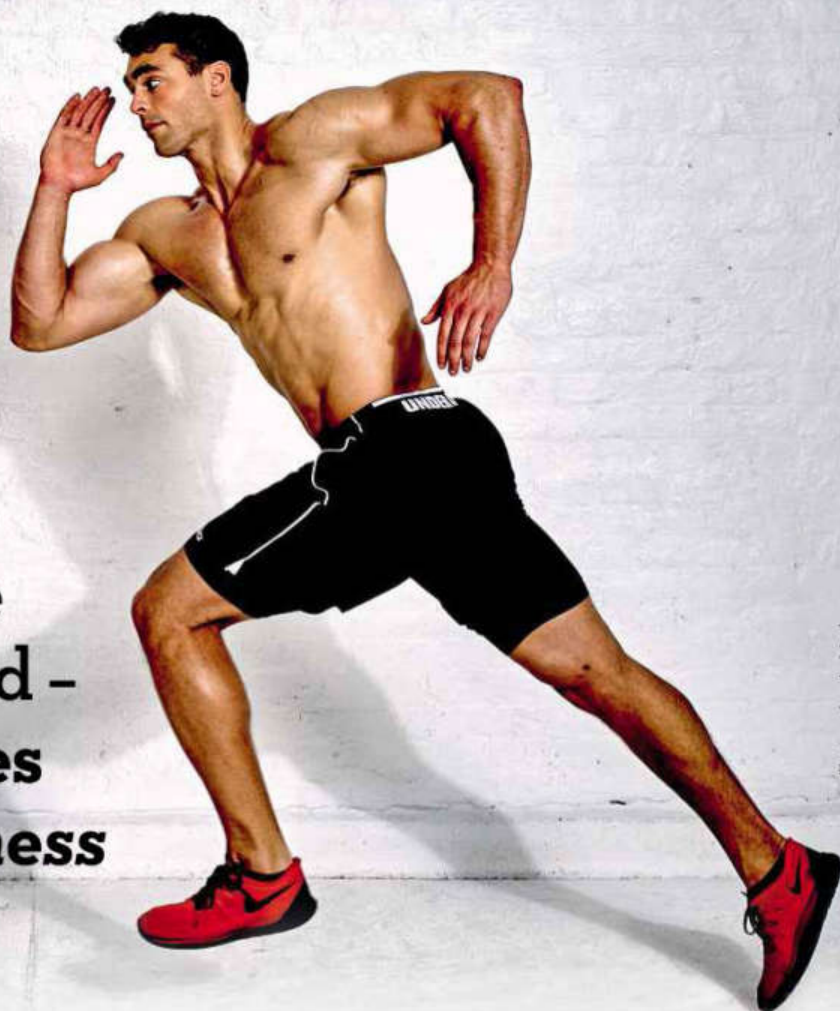




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